

THE STORY OF OUR NAVY

WILLIS J. ABBOT



less than half armed. At many points it was wide open to artillery fire from the river or from the opposite bank. Grant's plan involved a frontal attack from the river by Commodore A. H. Foote and seven gunboats, four armored, while the troops should be landed below the fort and attack it from the rear. Foote on hearing the plan quietly remarked that the fort would surrender to his guns before the troops could reach it, which proved to be the case. General Tilghman, in command of the defenders realized the hopelessness of his situation when he heard of the Federal advance and sent four-fifths of his garrison across country to Fort Donelson, desiring to expose as few men as possible to the risk of capture.

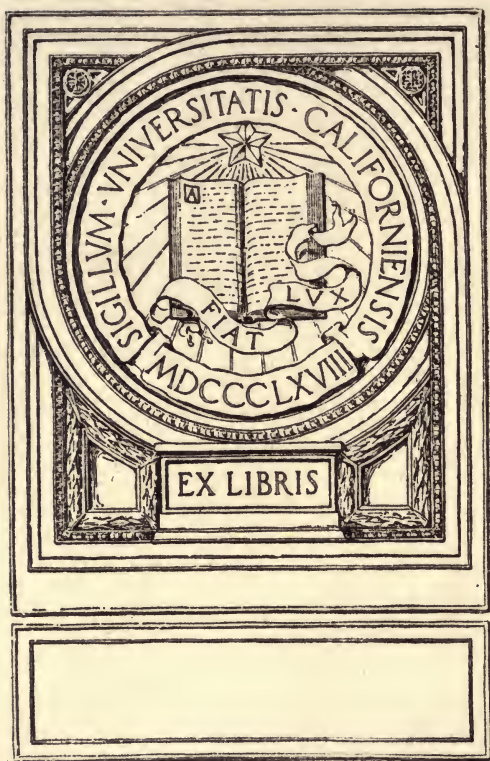
At daybreak on a chill February morning the Union troops took up their march through the dripping woods, while the gunboats cast off and steamed up the river. The four iron-clads led, steaming abreast. About a mile in the rear, came the three wooden vessels. The fort was soon in range; but both parties seemed anxious for a determined conflict, and no shot was fired on either side as the gunboats came sullenly on. How different must have been the feelings of the two combatants! Tilghman, with his handful of men, hardly able to work eight of the eleven guns mounted in his fort, and knowing that his defeat was a mere question of time; Foote, with his iron-clads and supporting gunboats, his seventy-two guns, and his knowledge that six thousand men were marching upon the rear of the Confederate works. On the one side, all was absolute certainty of defeat; on the other, calm confidence of victory.

When the flotilla was within a third of a mile of the fort, the fire began. The gunners on the ships could see the muzzles of the Confederate guns, the piles of shells and cannon-balls, and the men at their



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FARRAGUT'S FLEET ENGAGING THE ENEMY NEAR NEW ORLEANS, APRIL 26, 1862





U.S.S. "NORTH DAKOTA"

THE STORY OF OUR NAVY

From Colonial Days to the
Present Time

BY

WILLIS JOHN ABBOT

AUTHOR OF THE BLUE JACKET SERIES, THE BATTLEFIELD SERIES,
AMERICAN MERCHANT SHIPS AND SAILORS

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

VOL. II



NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY

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RAHWAY, N. J.

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THE STORY OF OUR NAVY

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CHAPTER XVI

Peace Again—The Decadence of the Navy—Its Work in the Mexican War—Perry and Japan—The Battle in the Pei Ho—"Blood Thicker than Water."

FROM the close of the War of 1812 to the opening of the Civil War the work of the navy was largely desultory. Exploring expeditions, cruises for the purpose of letting foreign peoples know that the United States had still an armed force afloat, kept busy the ships still in commission, until in 1846 the declaration of war against Mexico gave opportunity for real service. Of course, at that time the navy had fallen to its lowest estate. The thirty years and more of peace had encouraged the opponents of a suitable navy, and no new ships were built, while many of the old ones were laid up to rot in navy-yard anchorages. But when Mexico's growing antagonism, encouraged by specious promises of aid from France and England, menaced not merely the then Republic of Texas, but the United States ownership of California as well, the remnants of the navy were first to hurry to the scene of forthcoming war. It was not a war upon the ocean. While we had but a puny navy, the Mexicans had none at all. But in every considerable land battle the blue-jackets fought side by side with soldiers, though in the newspapers of the day all honor and glory were conceded to the army. Yet one who knows the California of to-day may read in the names of its cities, great streets, and other public places evidence of the part the navy had in winning the Golden State for the Union. No name is more closely identified with California than that of Commodore Robert F.

Stockton. In July, 1846, he was put in command of the Pacific squadron. Some work had already been done. Isolated vessels of this fleet had begun the work of holding California, but there were no soldiers at the seat of war save a battalion of engineers under command of Mayor John C. Fremont.

Some work had already been done by the navy on the coast. Captain Sloat, who preceded Stockton in command, had seized Monterey, taken possession of San Francisco Bay and the surrounding country, and garrisoned Sutter's Fort on the Sacramento River. When Stockton arrived all seaports, of which there are few on the California coast, were in control of the United States navy. His operations, therefore, were conducted inland, and his sailors fought far from the ships.

Captain Stockton planned an expedition against Los Angeles before the well-armed Mexican soldiers in the province could be brought together. He landed three hundred and fifty sailors and marines and established a camp at San Pedro. Captain Stockton's biographer says: "There were only about ninety muskets in the whole corps. Some of the men were armed with carbines, others had only pistols, swords, or boarding-pikes. They presented a motley and peculiar appearance, with great variety of costume. Owing to their protracted absence from home the supplies of shoes and clothing had fallen short; and the ragged and diversified colors of their garments, as well as the want of uniformity in their arms and accoutrements, made them altogether a spectacle both singular and amusing." The Mexican forces at Los Angeles outnumbered Captain Stockton's land forces three to one, so he resorted to a stratagem to deceive the enemy as to his force. A flag of truce having appeared on the hills, "he ordered all his men under arms and directed them to march

three or four abreast, with intervals of considerable space between each squad, directly in the line of vision of the approaching messengers, to the rear of some buildings on the beach, and thence to turn in a circle and continue their march until the strangers had arrived. Part of the circle described in the march was concealed from view, so that to the strangers it would appear that a force ten times greater than the actual number was defiling before them. When the two bearers of the flag of truce had arrived he ordered them to be led up to him alongside of the artillery, which consisted of several six-pounders and one thirty-two-pound carronade. The guns were all covered with skins so as to conceal their dimensions except the huge mouth of the thirty-two-pounder at which the captain was stationed to receive his guests. . . . As his purpose was intimidation he received them with much sternness." They asked for a truce, but Stockton demanded and secured an immediate and absolute surrender, as the evident object of the Mexicans was to gain time. Stockton at once began his tedious march to Los Angeles, his men dragging the cannon through the sand. On the 12th of August, he received a message from the Mexican general, saying "if he marched on the town he would find it the grave of his men." He replied: "Then tell your general to have the bells ready to toll at eight o'clock in the morning. I shall be there at that time." He was as good as his word. The next morning he was joined by Fremont and his men, who had come up from San Diego and they entered Los Angeles unopposed. He organized a civil government for the entire state, with Major Fremont as the head of it, and returning to his ships sailed northward on the 5th of September, 1846. The news of these operations was sent to Washington overland by the famous scout, Kit Carson.

Thereafter, until the end of the war, the American sailors were chiefly engaged in defending, and, in some instances, recapturing what they had taken. The Mexican troops were superior in number, but much inferior in dash and courage, and the blue-jackets found little difficulty in holding their own.

The operations on the eastern, or Gulf coast, of Mexico, engaged a much larger naval force, but had no such effect upon the later history of our country as Stockton's seizure of California. At times we had stationed there as many as twenty-four vessels of war, including steam frigates and sloops then for the first time employed in war. In the main, however, this force was occupied in blockading service—the most tedious, wearing duty that falls to the lot of the navy. Into the details of this service it would be but uninteresting to go. There was little effort to run the blockade, and less prize-money for the blockaders. Perhaps the only incident which combined adventure with dash and personal heroism may be quoted from the "Recollections of a Naval Officer," by Captain William Harwar Parker. He was telling of the blockade at Vera Cruz in 1846. He says:

One of the finest fellows in the service I often met on Green Island. I allude to Passed Midshipman Hynson, of Maryland. He was drowned in the brig "Somers," when she capsized in the fall of this year. At the time of her sinking, Hynson had both of his arms bandaged and in a sling, and was almost helpless. It was said that when the brig sank he managed to get hold of a spar with another man, and finding it would not support two he deliberately let go his hold. It was like him. The way he happened to have his arm in a sling was this: While the "Somers" was maintaining the blockade of Vera Cruz, a vessel managed to slip in—I think she was a Spanish schooner. The Mexicans moored her to the walls of the Castle of San Juan for safety; but the officers of the "Somers" resolved to cut her out or burn her. Hynson was the leading spirit in the affair, though Lieutenant James Parker, of Pennsylvania, was the senior officer. They took a boat one afternoon and pulled in to visit the officers of an English man-of-war lying under

Sacrificios Island. It was quite usual to do this. After nightfall they left the British ship and pulled directly for the schooner, which they boarded and carried. This, be it observed, was directly under the guns of the castle and the muskets of its garrison. The crew was secured, and finding the wind would not serve to take the vessel out, it was resolved to burn her. Her captain made some resistance, and the sentinel on the walls called out to know what was the matter. Parker, who spoke Spanish remarkably well, replied that his men were drunk and he was putting them in irons. The party then set fire to the vessel and got safely away with their prisoners. It was in setting fire to the schooner that Hynson got so badly burned.

In regard to the personal heroism shown by Hynson and others when the "Somers" went down, Lieutenant Raphael Semmes, in his book, "Service Afloat and Ashore During the Mexican War," said:

Those men who could not swim were selected to go into the boat. A large man by the name of Seymour, the ship's cook, having got into her, he was commanded by Lieutenant Parker to come out, in order that he might make room for two smaller men, and he *obeyed the order*. He was afterward permitted to return to her, however, when it was discovered that he could not swim. Passed Midshipman Hynson, a promising young officer, who had been partially disabled by a bad burn received in firing the "Creole" a few days previously, was particularly implored to go into the boat. A lad by the name of Nutter jumped out of the boat and offered his place to Hynson, and a man by the name of Powers did the same thing. Hynson refusing both offers, these men declared that then others might take their places, as they were resolved to abide in the wreck with him. Hynson and Powers were drowned. Nutter was saved. When the plunge was made into the sea, Sailing-Master Clemson seized a studding-sail boom, in company with five of the seamen. Being a swimmer, and perceiving that the boom was not sufficiently buoyant to support them all, he left it and struck out alone. He perished—the five men were saved.

The last notable service of the navy in the Mexican War was in co-operation with the army under General Winfield Scott at the siege and capture of Vera Cruz. General Scott had nearly fifteen thousand men under his command. On the 20th of March, 1847, after the

city had refused to surrender, he began its bombardment. Commodore Matthew C. Perry had just been put in command of the fleet, succeeding Commodore Conner, who was invalided home.

General Scott soon saw that his guns were not strong enough to batter down the walls of the city, so he requested Commodore Perry to send him some heavy guns. The commodore's gallant reply was: "Certainly, General, but I must fight them." And fight them he did, as we shall see. Six heavy pieces of ordnance were landed, and about two hundred seamen and volunteers were attached to each gun. Three of these were sixty-eight-pounder shell guns and three thirty-two-pounder solid-shot guns. Each of these guns weighed about three tons. Now each of these had to be dragged through the loose sand, almost knee-deep, for something like three miles before it could be put in the position the engineers had assigned to it. This battery, by the way, was protected by bags of sand piled on each other, and this was the first time that this device had been used. When the battery was in position the officers and men of the ships were so anxious to fight it that, to prevent jealousy, the officers first to be assigned drew lots for the honor. The first day Captain Aulick commanded, and the next day Captain Mayo. The naval battery fired with such precision that they did amazing damage to the enemy's works, and on the second day the guns in Vera Cruz were silenced. Then began a parley as to terms, but on the 28th there was an unconditional surrender. Now Scott had a foothold in the part of Mexico which counted for something, and he was able to begin his masterly march through the Valley of Mexico and on to the capital of the country. But he never could have obtained this foothold without the assistance of the navy. The country did not recognize this at once, and

the newspapers being printed by landsmen, all of the immediate glory was bestowed on General Scott.

Thereafter, there was little work for the navy in the Mexican War. The fighting was far inland, and though fierce in some instances—as at the Castle of Chapultepec—was uniformly in favor of the forces of the United States. Yet it was an unpopular war from the start—denounced in our northeastern States as unjust and piratical. To-day, when we see that it added to our domain California, Texas, and the line of southwestern States and Territories, leaving Mexico coherent, prosperous, and safe under the protection of her big northern brother, we may feel that contemporary judgments of the merits of a war are not always to be trusted.

* * * * *

Fourteen years of peace now settled over the navy. Again it was cut down to the smallest possible size. The few vessels left in commission were engaged in exploration—as in the case of the two expeditions sent to the Arctic to search for Sir John Franklin,—in the suppression of the slave trade, and in suppressing piracy in Asiatic waters. Doubtless the service rendered during this period which had the most far-reaching influence, not only upon our own country, but upon the civilized world, was that of Commodore M. C. Perry in opening Japan to trade and intercourse with the world. The early fifties were an era of exploring expeditions for the navy. There were trips up the rivers into unknown regions of South America and Africa. The Isthmus of Darien was explored, and an ambitious scheme to cut a ship-channel through was found to be impracticable. It was very natural, during this activity in penetrating little-known parts of the world, that attention should have been given to Japan, which was a land of mystery to the world at large because of

the exclusion of foreigners from that country. In 1852, Captain Perry was assigned the command of the squadron cruising in the East Indies, and was empowered, in addition to his ordinary duties, to make a display of force in the waters of Japan in order to obtain better treatment for American seamen cast upon Japanese shores, and to gain entry into Japanese ports for vessels seeking supplies. He bore a letter, moreover, from the President of the United States to the Emperor of Japan, written with a view to obtaining a treaty providing for friendly intercourse and commerce with the haughty island kingdom. On the 8th of July, the squadron, comprising the frigates "Mississippi," "Susquehanna," and "Powhatan"; the corvette "Macedonian"; the sloops-of-war "Plymouth," "Saratoga," and "Vandalia"; and the store-ships "Supply," "Southampton," and "Lexington," anchored off the city of Uraga, in the Bay of Jeddo, Japan. Captain Perry decided that the proper course to pursue with the Japanese was to assume a very lofty and commanding tone and bearing. He therefore ordered away from the sides of his vessel the boats which swarmed around it, and allowed none but government officials of high rank to come on board. He himself remained in seclusion in his cabin, treating with the Japanese through intermediaries. He moved his squadron nearer the capital than was allowable, and then demanded that a special commission, composed of men of the highest rank, be appointed to convey his letter from the President to the Emperor. The close proximity of the ships-of-war to the capital, and Captain Perry's peremptory demand, were not at all to the liking of the Japanese; but they were greatly impressed with his apparent dignity and power, and at last consented to receive and consider the letter. Fearing treachery, Captain Perry moved his ships up so

that their guns would command the building prepared for his reception, and on the 14th of July went ashore with an escort of four hundred officers and men, who found themselves, on landing, surrounded by about six thousand Japanese soldiers under arms.

Three months were given to the Japanese officials to reply to the letter, and Captain Perry sailed with his squadron for the coast of China. He returned after an interval of three months, and anchored his ships beyond Uraga, where the previous conference had been held, and nearer the capital, despite the fact that a place twenty miles below had been appointed for the second meeting. The Japanese demurred at this, being so exclusive that they did not wish their capital nor their country even to be seen by foreigners. Instead of respecting these wishes, Captain Perry approached still nearer, until he was only eight miles from Tokio. This high-handed policy had the desired effect. Five special Japanese commissioners met Captain Perry, and in a building within range of the ships' guns, negotiations were carried on. They resulted, on March 31st, in the signing of a treaty by the Japanese, in which they promised to open two of their ports to American vessels seeking supplies; to give aid to seamen of the United States wrecked upon their shores; to allow American citizens temporarily residing in their ports to enter, within prescribed limits, the surrounding country; to permit consuls of the United States to reside in one of the open ports; and, in general, to show a peaceful and friendly spirit toward our government and citizens. This treaty is important, because it opened the door for the peoples of the world to a country which has since proved to be possessed of vast wealth and resources. Captain Perry received high praise for his firmness and diplomacy in the conduct of the difficult negotiations.

One vessel of Captain Perry's fleet, the "Plymouth," had remained at Shanghai when the squadron returned to Japanese waters, and she played a very active though brief part in the troubles which then existed in China. Imperial and revolutionary troops were fighting for supremacy, and the former showed a hostile disposition to the American and English residents of Shanghai. An American pilot was captured by an Imperial man-of-war, but was retaken in a most spirited manner from the Chinese by Lieutenant Guest, and a boat's crew from the "Plymouth." The Chinese manifestations of hostility toward foreign residents continued, and on the 4th of April, 1854, about ninety men from the "Plymouth" and American merchant-ships, under the leadership of Commander Kelly, went ashore, and in conjunction with one hundred and fifty men from a British man-of-war, began an attack up the Imperial camp. The Americans had two field-pieces and a twelve-pound boat-howitzer, which, together with the muskets, were used so effectively that, after ten minutes of sharp fighting, the Chinese fled in great disorder, leaving a number of dead and wounded upon the field. The American loss was two killed and four wounded.

Piracy was rampant in the China seas during this period, and so bold and ferocious were the Chinese desperadoes that their junks were a great terror to merchant vessels, and seriously interfered with commerce. The "Powhatan," another of Captain Perry's squadron, and the English sloop "Rattler," joined forces against a fleet of piratical junks off Khulan, in 1855, and completely destroyed them, killing many of the pirates in the attack and taking a large number of prisoners. In Happy Valley, Hong-Kong, a monument was erected to commemorate the eight English and American sailors who were killed in the conflict.

One impetuous act by an American commander during the period of troubles along the Chinese coast gave world-wide currency to a phrase of Anglo-Saxon amity, and did much to establish the friendship between the United States and Great Britain which has so long continued. In 1859 an English expedition was trying to remove some obstructions in the Peiho River when they were suddenly fired upon from Chinese forts on the bank. A desperate conflict followed in which several hundred of the English were killed. Captain Tatnall commanded the chartered steamer "Toey-Wan," which was in the harbor. He forgot his neutrality as he watched the scene. With the exclamation, "Blood is thicker than water!" he jumped into his launch and steamed for the British flagship. The boat was struck with a ball, and before its trip was ended sunk, the coxswain being killed and Lieutenant Trenchart severely wounded. The others who had manned her were rescued, and they helped the English at the guns. Captain Tatnall afterward used the "Toey-Wan" to tow up and bring into action the British reserves. His action was a clear violation of the treaty and the neutrality law. He received but slight punishment, however, and gained great popularity in Great Britain.

So in rather inconspicuous and not particularly exhilarating service the men of the navy passed fourteen years. We shall see that when the great guns roared again in wrath they were directed against other Americans in the most bloody civil war of all history.

CHAPTER XVII

The Civil War—Secretary Dix's Stirring Dispatch—The South Destitute of Warships—The Blockade—Burning the Norfolk Navy-Yard—The Escape of the "Sumter"—The Hatteras Forts.

WHEN the long-smouldering hostility between the Northern and Southern States of the Union blazed out into civil war the United States Government had at its disposal sixty-nine men-of-war, of which twenty-seven were laid up, or sailors would say "out of commission." Many of those in active service were on missions to the East Indies, Africa, and other distant quarters of the globe. Though immediately upon the inauguration of President Lincoln, March 4, 1861, all were ordered home, none arrived until the middle of June, and some not until the following winter. Many were old-fashioned sailing frigates—almost useless even in that early day of steam. But how swiftly the navy was rehabilitated, how vital its expansion was considered to the maintenance of national unity, may be judged from the fact that at the end of Lincoln's first term the navy numbered six hundred and seventy-one vessels—many iron-plated, for the duel between the "Monitor" and the "Merrimac" had taught the world that lesson. All this had been accomplished by a people grappling in deadly strife with an enemy in their very dwellings. History records no more wonderful story of energy and invention.

But at the outbreak of the war the States of the South were even more destitute of warships. In fact, they had not one. While many officers of the United States navy felt it their duty to resign their national

commissions and serve their native States, not one United States war-vessel was surrendered to the Confederacy. Some revenue cutters were, indeed, thus lost to the service. A suspicion that Captain Breshwood, commander of the cutter "McClelland," was about to take such action led to the historic dispatch from John A. Dix, Secretary of the Treasury: "Tell Lieutenant Caldwell to arrest Captain Breshwood, assume command of the cutter, and obey my orders through you. If Captain Breshwood after arrest attempts to interfere with the command of the cutter, tell Lieutenant Caldwell to consider him a mutineer and treat him accordingly. *If any man attempts to haul down the American flag shoot him on the spot.*"

Not only was the South destitute of ships, it was almost without the means of building them. It was an agricultural and exporting country, but the wealth of cotton, resin, and turpentine it shipped abroad was carried in vessels built in New England shipyards. About the only craft built in the South were the river steamers, and we shall presently see how cleverly these flimsy fabrics were converted into formidable ironclads. Nor could many vessels be obtained abroad. The rules of neutrality forbade it. The alert and tactful Confederate agent in London, Mr. Bulloch, did indeed get three ships to sea—the "Florida," "Shenandoah," and "Alabama." But thereafter British shipyards were closed against Confederate agents, and years later Great Britain paid a penalty of fifteen million dollars for its temerity in permitting the "Alabama" to escape.

This great disparity of force afloat had much to do with the outcome of the war. The blockade of Southern ports, early established, was tight as an iron band. The South could neither export its cotton, nor import arms, munitions of war, medicines, cloth, and

other articles not manufactured in the Confederacy. Quinine, for example, of almost universal use in Southern climates, was rigidly excluded, and the small quantities that dribbled through the blockade brought prodigious prices. In addition to the blockade, the navy was of inestimable advantage in expediting the movement of troops. The South is prolific of harbors and navigable streams. The United States navy battered down the forts that guarded the harbors and enabled troops to land at a score of places and to proceed by water to the heart of the enemy's country. It has been the habit to underestimate the navy's work in contemplating the more colossal operations of the armies. But the two branches of the service were indeed united, and there was glory enough for both.

The South well understood at the very outset the heavy handicap imposed by lack of sea-power. The first effort to secure fighting ships was an attempt to seize the historic frigate "Constitution," which was at anchor near Annapolis. This was balked by the troops under command of General Benjamin F. Butler, who were encamped near by. But the second effort to acquire some of the naval resources of the Federal Government was more successful. The United States navy-yard at Norfolk was one of the most valuable of all the governmental possessions. In the great yard was government property amounting to more than twenty millions of dollars. Machine-shops, foundries, dwellings for officers, and a massive granite dry-dock made it one of the most complete navy-yards in the world. An enormous quantity of cannon, cannon-balls, powder, and small-arms packed the huge storehouses. In the magnificent harbor were lying some of the most formidable vessels of the United States navy, including the steam frigate "Merrimac," of which we shall hear much hereafter. Small wonder was it, that the

people of Virginia, about to secede from the Union, looked with covetous eyes upon this vast stock of munitions of war lying apparently within their grasp.

The first thing to be done was to entrap the ships so that they should be unable to get out of the harbor. Accordingly, on the 16th of April, three large stone-vessels were sunk directly in the channel, apparently barring the exit of the frigates most effectually. Indeed, so confident of success were the plotters, that in a dispatch to Richmond, announcing the successful sinking of the stone-ships, they said: "Thus have we secured for Virginia three of the best ships of the navy." But later events showed, that, in boasting so proudly, the Virginians were committing the old error of counting chickens before they were hatched.

At seven o'clock on the night of April 21, the United States steamer "Pawnee," which had been lying under the guns of Fortress Monroe, hoisted anchor, and headed up the bay, on an errand of destruction. It was too late to save the navy-yard with its precious stores. The only thing to be done was to burn, break, and destroy everything that might be of service to an enemy. The decks of the "Pawnee" were black with men,—soldiers to guard the gates, and complete the work of destruction within the yard; blue-jacketed tars to do what might be done to drag the entrapped vessels from the snare set them by the Virginians. It was a bright moonlight night. The massive hull of the ship-of-war, black in the cold, white rays of the moon, passed rapidly up the Elizabeth River. The sunken wrecks were reached, and successfully avoided; and about nine o'clock the "Pawnee" steamed into the anchorage of the navy-yard, to be greeted with cheers from the tars of the "Cumberland" and "Pennsylvania," who expected her arrival. The townspeople seeing the war-vessel, with ports

thrown open, and black muzzles of the guns protruding, took to their houses, fearing she would open fire on the town. Quickly the "Pawnee" steamed to her moorings. The marines were hurriedly disembarked, and hastened to guard the entrances to the navy-yard. Howitzers were planted so as to rake every street leading to the yard. Thus secure against attack, the work of the night began. Nearly two thousand willing hands were set hard at work, cannon were dismounted and spiked, rifles and muskets dashed to pieces; great quantities of combustibles were piled up in the mammoth buildings, ready to be fired at a given signal. In the meantime, the blue-jackets were not idle. It was quickly decided, that, of all the magnificent vessels anchored in the harbor, the "Cumberland" was the only one that could be towed past the obstructions in the river. All hands were set to work removing everything of value from the doomed vessels to the "Cumberland." Gunpowder and combustibles were then arranged so as to completely destroy the vessels when ignited. When the moon went down at twelve o'clock, the preparations were complete. All the men were then taken on board the "Cumberland" and "Pawnee," save a few who were left to fire the trains. As the two vessels started from the moorings, the barracks were fired, the lurid light casting a fearful gleam upon the crowded yards and shrouds of the towering frigate. A little way out in the stream a rocket was sent up from the "Pawnee." This was the signal for the firing of the trains. The scene that followed is thus described by an eye-witness:

The rocket sped high in air, paused a second, and burst in showers of many colored lights; and, as it did so, the well-set trains at the ship-houses, and on the decks of the fated vessels left behind, went off as if lit simultaneously by the rocket. One of the ship-houses contained the old "New York," a ship thirty years on the stocks,

and yet unfinished; the other was vacant. But both houses, and the old "New York," burned like tinder. The vessels fired were the "Pennsylvania," the "Merrimac," the "Germantown," the "Plymouth," the "Raritan," the "Columbia," and the "Dolphin." The old "Delaware" and "Columbus," worn-out and disabled seventy-fours, were scuttled, and sunk at the upper docks on Friday.

I need not try to picture the scene of the grand conflagration that now burst like the day of judgment on the startled citizens of Norfolk, Portsmouth, and all the surrounding country. Any one who has seen a ship burn, and knows how like a fiery serpent the flame leaps from pitchy deck to smoking shrouds, and writhes to their very top around the masts that stand like martyrs doomed, can form some idea of the wonderful display that followed. It was not thirty minutes from the time the trains were fired, till the conflagration roared like a hurricane, and the flames from land and water swayed and met and mingled together, and darted high, and fell, and leaped up again, and by their very motion showed their sympathy with the crackling, crashing war of destruction beneath.

But in all this magnificent scene the old ship "Pennsylvania" was the centre-piece. She was a very giant in death, as she had been in life. She was a sea of flame; and when the iron had entered her soul, and her bowels were consuming, then did she spout forth from every porthole of every deck torrents and cataracts of fire, that to the mind of Milton would have represented her a frigate of hell pouring out unending broadsides of infernal fire. Several of her guns were left loaded, but not shotted; and as the fire reached them they sent out on the startled morning air minute-guns of fearful peal, that added greatly to the alarm that the light of the fire had spread through the country round about. The "Pennsylvania" burned like a volcano for five hours and a half before her mainmast fell. I stood watching the proud but perishing old leviathan as this emblem of her majesty was about to come down. At precisely half-past nine o'clock the tall tree that stood in her centre tottered and fell, and crushed deep into her burning sides.

During this scene the people of the little town, and the Virginia militiamen who had been summoned to take possession of the navy-yard, were no idle spectators. Hardly had the "Pawnee" steamed out into the stream, when the great gates were battered down, and crowds of men rushed in, eager to save whatever arms were uninjured. Throughout the fire they worked like beavers, and succeeded in saving a large quantity

of munitions of war to be used by the Confederacy. The ships that had been fired all burned to the water's edge. One was raised, and reappeared as the formidable "Merrimac," called by the Confederates the "Virginia," that at one time threatened the destruction of the whole Union navy.

A great amount of valuable property was saved for the Virginians by the coolness of a young boy, the son of one of the citizens of the town. This lad was within the gates of the navy-yard when the troops from the ships rushed in, and closed and barricaded them against the townspeople. He was frightened, and hid himself behind a quantity of boards and rubbish, and lay there a silent and immensely frightened spectator of the work of destruction. An officer passed near him directing the movements of two sailors, who were laying a train of gunpowder to an immense pile of explosives and combustibles in the huge granite dry-dock. The train passed over a broad board; and the boy, hardly knowing what he did, drew away this board, leaving a gap of eight inches in the train. When all the trains were fired, this was of course stopped at the gap; the dry-dock was saved, and still remains in the Norfolk navy-yard.

The first regularly commissioned Confederate man-of-war to take the sea was the "Sumter," an old merchant steamer, remodelled and armed with five guns. Only five hundred tons register, smaller than the average millionaire's pleasure yacht to-day, this ship ranged the seas for a year, capturing eighteen vessels, only to be blockaded at Gibraltar and there finally sold and abandoned.

It was on the 1st of June, 1861, that the "Sumter" cast loose from the levee at New Orleans, and started down the Mississippi on her way to the open sea. The great levee of the Crescent City was crowded with

people that day. Now and again the roll of the drum, or the stirring notes of "Dixie," would be heard, as some volunteer company marched down to the river to witness the departure of the entire Confederate navy. Slowly the vessel dropped down the river, and, rounding the English turn, boomed out with her great gun a parting salute to the city she was never more to see. Ten miles from the mouth of the river she stopped; for anchored off the bar below lay the powerful United States steamer, "Brooklyn," with three other men-of-war.

But the blockaders were eluded after several days' delay, and the ship was soon lost to its foes.

When four days out, the "Sumter" captured her first prize. She was a fine ship, the "Golden Rocket" of Maine, six hundred and ninety tons. With the United States flag fluttering at the peak, she came sailing proudly towards her unsuspected enemy, from whose peak the red flag of England was displayed as a snare. When the two vessels came within a mile of each other, the wondering crew of the merchantman saw the English flag come tumbling down, while a ball of bunting rose quickly to the peak of the mysterious stranger, and, catching the breeze, floated out, showing a strange flag,—the Stars and Bars of the Confederacy. At the same minute a puff of smoke from the "Long Tom" amidships was followed by a solid shot ricochetting along the water before the dismayed merchantman, and conveying a forcible, but not at all polite, invitation to stop. The situation dawned on the astonished skipper of the ship,—he was in the hands of "the Rebels"; and with a sigh he brought his vessel up into the wind, and awaited the outcome of the adventure. And bad enough the outcome was for him; for Captain Semmes, unwilling to spare a crew to man the prize, determined to set her on fire.

It was about sunset when the first boat put off from the "Sumter" to visit the captured ship. The two vessels were lying a hundred yards apart, rising and falling in unison on the slow-rolling swells of the tropic seas. The day was bright and warm, and in the west the sun was slowly sinking to the meeting line of sky and ocean. All was quiet and peaceful, as only a summer afternoon in Southern seas can be. Yet in the midst of all that peace and quiet, a scene in the great drama of war was being enacted. Nature was peaceful, man violent.

For a time nothing was heard save the measured thump of the oars in the rowlocks, as the boats plied to and fro between the two ships, transporting the captured crew of the "Sumter." Finally the last trip was made, and the boat hoisted to the davits. Then all eyes were turned toward the "Golden Rocket." She lay almost motionless, a dark mass on the black ocean. The sun had long since sunk beneath the horizon; and the darkness of the night was only relieved by the brilliancy of the stars, which in those latitudes shine with wondrous brightness. Soon the watches on the "Sumter" caught a hasty breath. A faint gleam was seen about the companionway of the "Rocket." Another instant, and with a roar and crackle, a great mass of flame shot up from the hatch, as from the crater of a volcano. Instantly the well-tarred rigging caught, and the flame ran up the shrouds as a ladder of fire, and the whole ship was a towering mass of flame. The little band of men on the "Sumter" looked on the terrific scene with bated breath. Though they fully believed in the justice of their cause, they could not look on the destruction they had wrought without feelings of sadness. It was their first act of war. One of the officers of the "Sumter" writes: "Few, few on board can forget the spectacle,—a ship

set fire to at sea. It would seem that man was almost warring with his Maker. Her helpless condition, the red flames licking the rigging as they climbed aloft, the sparks and pieces of burning rope taken off by the wind, and flying miles to leeward, the ghastly glare thrown upon the dark sea as far as the eye could reach, and then the deathlike stillness of the scene,—all these combined to place the “Golden Rocket” on the tablet of our memories forever.” But it was not long before the crew of the “Sumter” could fire a vessel, and sail away indifferently, with hardly a glance at their terrible handiwork.

When the “Sumter” was finally abandoned her captain, Rafael Semmes, and the crew went to England to take over a mysterious craft just built and called “The 290.” Of this ship we shall hear much in time.

The early services of the men of the United States navy in the Civil War were monotonous in the extreme. The blockade along the coast was supplemented by a patrol of the Potomac from Washington to its mouth, to prevent smuggling and check as far as possible the erection of hostile batteries on the Virginia shore. Not until the last of August, 1861, did a real naval expedition plough the blue Atlantic.

From Cape Henry, at the mouth of the James River, the coast of Virginia and North Carolina sweeps grandly out to the eastward, like a mammoth bow, with its lower end at Beaufort, two hundred miles south. Along this coast-line the great surges of mighty ocean, rolling with unbroken course from the far-off shore of Europe, trip and fall with unceasing roar upon an almost uninterrupted beach of snowy sand, a hundred and more miles long. Near the southern end of this expanse of sand stands a lighthouse, towering solitary above the surrounding plain of sea and sand. No

inviting beacon giving notice to the weary mariner of safe haven is this steady light that pierces the darkness night after night. It tells of treacherous shoals and roaring breakers; of the loss of many a good ship, whose ribs, half buried in the drifting sand, lie rotting in the salt air; of skies ever treacherous, and waters ever turbulent. It is the light of Hatteras.

Some twenty miles below Cape Hatteras light occurs the first great opening in the stretch of sand that extends south from Cape Henry. Once he has passed through this opening, the mariner finds himself in the most peaceful waters. The waves of the Atlantic spend themselves on the sandy fringe outside, while within are the quiet waters of Pamlico and Albemarle sounds, dotted with fertile islands, and bordering a coast rich in harbors. The wary blockade-runner, eluding the watchfulness of the United States blockaders cruising outside, had but to pass the portals of Hatteras Inlet, to unload at his leisure his precious cargo, and load up with the cotton which grew in great abundance on the islands and fertile shores of the sound.

Recognizing the importance of this harbor, the Confederates had early in the war fortified the point north of Hatteras Inlet. Shortly after the fall of Fort Sumter, a Yankee skipper, Daniel Campbell, incautiously running his schooner the "Lydia Francis" too near the stormy cape, was wrecked, and sought shelter among the people at the inlet. When, some days after, he proposed to leave, he was astounded to find that he had been delivered from the sea only to fall a prey to the fortunes of war. He was kept a prisoner for three months; and on his release, going directly to Fortress Monroe, he proved that he had kept his eyes open to some purpose. He reported to flag-officer Stringham that the Confederates had two batteries,—one of ten, the other of five guns,—known

as Fort Hatteras and Fort Clark. With these two forts the Confederates claimed that they could control the entrance to Albemarle Sound.

Immediately upon receipt of this intelligence preparations were made for a joint military and naval expedition against the forts. Two transports carried eight hundred soldiers from General Butler's command. Five men-of-war constituted the naval force. As it turned out, the success of the expedition depended upon the navy, for a heavy tempest made the landing of troops in sufficient numbers to storm the forts impossible. But two days' bombardment by the fleet silenced the forts and drove their defenders to the bomb-proofs and then to surrender. But it was not a sanguinary battle. Neither side was composed of veterans. The Confederate gun-practice was poor, and the Confederate loss was so trivial that a year later not one of the men engaged would have thought of surrender. As for the assailants, when Commodore Barron went off to the fleet to formally surrender the forts and the eight hundred men of his command, he turned to flag-officer Stringham, and asked if the loss of life on the ships had been very large. "Not a man has been injured," was the response. "Wonderful!" exclaimed the questioner. "No one could have imagined that this position could have been captured without sacrificing thousands of men." But so it was. Without the loss of a man, had fallen a most important post, together with cannon, provisions, and nearly seven hundred men.

That long, surf-washed, sandy coast of North Carolina made plenty of trouble for the United States military and naval authorities throughout the war. Well supplied with harbors, or with narrow inlets into such shallow and peaceful waters as Albemarle and Pamlico sounds, it was equally useful as an invitation to

blockade-runners and shelters for small privateers that could dash out into the Atlantic, capture a few coasters, and vanish in the maze of bays and rivers sheltered by the sandbars of Hatteras. It was therefore early determined to reduce all this region to subjection to Federal authority. The work demanded the services of both army and navy; the campaigns were decidedly amphibious—by sea, by land, and in the swamps composed of both. There was little warlike adventure in any of these operations. The chief forces to contend with were those of nature, as strikingly shown in the expedition of January, 1862, against Roanoke Island. This point controlled the entrance to Pamlico Sound, from which many navigable rivers and bays stretch far into the interior. To attack it the expedition had to pass through Hatteras Inlet, past the forts, the capture of which has just been described.

Early in January, 1862, a joint military and naval expedition was fitted out for operation against the Confederate works and steamers in these inland waters. The flotilla was one of those heterogeneous collections of remodelled excursion-steamers, tugs, ferry-boats, and even canal-boats, which at that time was dignified with the title of "the fleet." In fitting out this expedition two very conflicting requirements were followed. In the most favorable circumstances, the channel at Hatteras Inlet is seldom over seven and a half feet: consequently the vessels must be of light draught. But the Confederate steamers in the sounds carried heavy rifled cannon, and the armament of the forts on Roanoke Island was of the heaviest: therefore, the vessels must carry heavy guns to be able to cope with the enemy. This attempt to put a heavy armament on the gun-deck made the vessels roll so heavily as to be almost unseaworthy.

In addition to the armed vessels belonging to the

navy, a number of transports accompanied the expedition, bearing the army corps under the command of General Burnside; and the whole number of craft finally assembled for the subjugation of the North Carolina sounds was one hundred and twenty. This heterogeneous assemblage of vessels was sent on a voyage in the dead of winter, down a dangerous coast, to one of the stormiest points known to the mariner. Hatteras was true to its reputation; and, when the squadron reached the inlet, a furious northeaster was blowing, sending the gray clouds scudding across the sky, and making the heavy rollers break on the beach and the bar in a way that foretold certain destruction, should any hardy pilot attempt to run his ship into the narrow and crooked inlet. Outside there was no safe anchorage, and the situation of the entire squadron was most precarious.

For two days this gale continued. The outlook for the fleet seemed hopeless. The inner bar of the harbor was absolutely impassable. Between the outer bar and the inner were packed seventy vessels. The space, though called a harbor, was almost unsheltered. Crowded with vessels as it was, it made an anchorage only less dangerous than that outside. Although the vessels were anchored, bow and stern, the violence of the sea was such that they frequently crashed into each other, breaking bulwarks, spars, and wheel-houses, and tearing away standing-rigging. A schooner breaking from its anchorage went tossing and twirling through the fleet, crashing into vessel after vessel, until finally, getting foul of a small steamer, dragged it from its moorings; and the two began a waltz in the crowded harbor, to the great detriment of the surrounding craft. At last the two runaways went aground on a shoal, and pounded away there until every seam was open, and the holds filled with water.

A strange mishap was that which befell the gunboat "Zouave." She was riding safely at anchor, remote from other ships, taking the seas nobly, and apparently in no possible danger. Her crew occupied themselves in going to the assistance of those in the distressed vessels, feeling that their own was perfectly safe. But during the night, the tide being out, the vessel was driven against one of the flukes of her own anchor; and as each wave lifted her up and dropped her heavily on the sharp iron, a hole was stove in her bottom, sinking her so quickly that the crew took to the boats, saving nothing.

But the most serious disaster was the total wreck of the "City of New York," a large transport, with a cargo of ordnance stores valued at two hundred thousand dollars. Unable to enter the inlet, she tried to ride out the gale outside. The tremendous sea, and the wind blowing furiously on shore, caused her to drag her anchors; and those on board saw certain death staring them in the face, as hour by hour the ship drifted nearer and nearer to the tumbling mass of mighty breakers, that with an unceasing roar, and white foam gleaming like the teeth of an enraged lion, broke heavily on the sand. She struck on Monday afternoon, and soon swung around, broadside to the sea, so as to be helpless and at the mercy of the breakers. Every wave broke over her decks. The conditions of her crew was frightful. In the dead of winter, the wind keen as a razor, and the waves of icy coldness, the body soon became benumbed; and it was with the greatest effort that the men could cling to the rigging. So great was the fury of the wind and waves, that no assistance could be given her. For a boat to venture into that seething caldron of breakers would have been throwing away lives. So the crew of the doomed ship were left to save themselves as best they might. The

night passed away, and Tuesday morning saw the gale still blowing with unabated force. Hoping to lessen the strain on the hull, they cut away the foremast. In falling, it tore away the pipes, and the vessel became a perfect wreck. Numbed with cold, and faint for lack of food, the crew lashed themselves to the bulwarks and rigging; and so, drenched by the icy spray, and chilled through by the wind, they spent another fearful night. The next day the fury of the storm seemed to have somewhat abated. The sea was still running high, and breaking over the almost unrecognizable hulk stranded on the beach. With the aid of a glass, sailors on the other ships could see the inanimate forms of the crew lashed to the rigging. It was determined to make a vigorous attempt to save them. The first boat sent out on the errand of mercy was watched eagerly from all the vessels. Now it would be seen raised high on the top of some tremendous wave, then, plunging into the trough, it would be lost from the view of the anxious watchers. All went well until the boat reached the outermost line of the breakers, when suddenly a towering wave, rushing resistlessly along, broke directly over the stern, swamping the boat, and drowning seven of the crew. Again the last hope seemed lost to the exhausted men on the wreck. But later in the day, the sea having gone down somewhat, a steam-tug succeeded in reaching the wreck and rescuing the crew. The second engineer was the last man to leave the ship. He remained lashed to the mast until all were taken on the tug. Then, climbing to the top-mast, he cut down the flag that had waved during those two wild days and nights, and bore it safely away.

Two weeks were consumed in refitting and preparing for the attack upon the three formidable forts the Confederates were known to have on Roanoke Island.

When the expedition moved nearly one hundred vessels were in the three columns that moved slowly toward the enemy's position. It was five in the afternoon of a short February day that the fleet came in sight of the forts. Signals were made for the squadron to form in a circle about the flagship. The early darkness of winter had fallen upon the scene. The waters of the sound were smooth as a mill-pond. From the white cottages on the shore gleamed lights, and brilliant signal-lanterns hung in the rigging of the ships. Through the fleet pulled swift gigs bearing the commanders of the different vessels.

The morning dawned dark and rainy. At first it was thought that the fog and mist would prevent the bombardment, but all doubt was put at an end by the signal, "Prepare for action," from the flagship.

The fleet got under way, and stood up the channel almost to the point where the obstructions were planted. Beyond these were the gunboats of the enemy. The cannonade was begun without loss of time. A portion of the fleet began a vigorous fire upon the Confederate gunboats, while the others attacked the forts. The gunboats were soon driven away, and then the forts received the entire fire. The water was calm, and the aim of the gunners was admirable. The forts could hardly respond to the fire, since the great shells, plunging by hundreds into the trenches, drove the men from their guns into the bomb-proof casemates. The officers of the ships could watch with their glasses the effect of every shell, and by their directions the aim of the gunners was made nearly perfect.

While the bombarding was going on, General Burnside set about landing his troops near the southern end of the island. The first boat was fired upon by soldiers concealed in the woods. The "Delaware" instantly pitched a few shells into the woods from which the

firing proceeded, and in a few minutes the enemy could be seen running out like rats from a burning granary. The landing then went on unimpeded. The boats were unable to get up to the bank, owing to shoal water; and the soldiers were obliged to wade ashore in the icy water, waist-deep, and sinking a foot more in the soft mud of the bottom.

The bombardment was continued for some hours after nightfall. A night bombardment is a stirring scene. The passionate and spiteful glare of the cannon-flashes; the unceasing roar of the explosions; the demoniac shriek of the shells in the air, followed by their explosion with a lightning flash, and crash like thunder; the volumes of gray smoke rising upon the dark air,—make up a wonderful and memorable sight.

In the morning the bombardment was recommenced, and the work of landing troops went on. Eight gun-boats were sent to tear away the obstructions in the channel; and there beneath the guns of the enemy's fleet, and the frowning cannon of the forts, the sailors worked with axe and ketch until the barricade was broken, and the eight ships passed to the sound above the forts. In the meantime, the troops on the island began to march against the forts. There were few paths, and they groped their way through woods and undergrowth, wading through morasses, and tearing their way through tangled thickets to get at the enemy's front. The advance was slow, but steady, until the open field before the forts was reached; then a charge was ordered, led by the famous Hawkins Zouaves, who rushed madly upon the fort, shouting their war cry of *Zou, zou, zou!* Like a resistless flood the attackers poured over the earthworks, and the frightened defenders fled. Before five o'clock the entire island was in the hands of the troops, and the fleet had passed the barricade. During the bombardment the vessels

sustained severe injuries. An act of heroism which made the hero celebrated was that of John Davis, gunner's mate on board the "Valley City." A shell entered the magazine of that ship, and exploded, setting the wood-work on fire. An open barrel of gunpowder stood in the midst of the flames, with sparks dropping about it. At any moment an explosion might occur which would shatter the vessel to fragments. Men shrank back, expecting every moment to be their last. With wonderful presence of mind Davis threw himself across the open end of the barrel, and with his body covered the dangerous explosive until the fire was put out.

As soon as the Stars and Stripes were hoisted on the flagstaffs of the forts, the Confederate fleet, which had been maintaining a desultory fire, fled up the sound, after setting fire to one schooner which had become hopelessly crippled in the battle. She blazed away far on into the night, and finally, when the flames reached her magazine, blew up with a tremendous report, seeming like a final involuntary salute paid by the defeated enemy to the prowess of the Union arms. When quiet finally settled down upon the scene, and General Burnside and Commander Goldsborough counted up their gains, they found that six forts, twenty-five hundred prisoners, and forty-two great guns had fallen into the hands of the victors. The Union loss was forty killed and two hundred wounded.

CHAPTER XVIII

A Romance of Commerce and War—The Blockade Runners—What the Trade Paid—How It Was Checked—Nassau's Days of Prosperity.

IT is an ill wind, the proverb has it, that blows nobody good. The maxim is peculiarly applicable to the blockade which gradually starved the South into helplessness. But on the Southern plantations were piled hundreds of thousands of bales of cotton worth its weight in gold in Manchester and Birmingham, where the great mills were shutting down, and their operatives starving, for lack of America's greatest staple. And in England were stores of medicines, woolen goods, salt, and munitions of war, all salable for prodigious prices if once landed on Southern soil. Out of this situation sprung the business of running the blockade—an adventurous pursuit which thrived mightily notwithstanding its perils.

From the very first the Federal Government concentrated its attention upon the blockade. It was no mere "paper blockade," made up of edicts and proclamations without ships to enforce it. By the end of 1861 there was not a port, inlet, or river's mouth south of the Potomac not guarded by two or three armed vessels of the United States. Nor were they a menace only—they did things. At the end of 1863 the Secretary of the Navy reported one thousand and forty-five vessels captured, classified as follows: schooners, five hundred and forty-seven; steamers, one hundred and seventy-nine; sloops, one hundred and seventeen; brigs, thirty; barks, twenty-six; ships, fifteen; yachts and boats, one hundred and seventeen. Nevertheless,

the trade prospered; swift steamers were built especially for it, fortunes were made by the owners of the ships, and even by their sailors. One thousand dollars for the ordinary sailor, and eight or nine thousand for a captain, was no unusual return for one brief voyage.

When the business was systematized by the early part of '62 the method was to send great cargoes of merchandise from England to Nassau or Matamoras—neutral ports, so that thus far the goods were exempt from capture. Thence they were shipped through the lines into the Confederacy, in danger of confiscation every moment they were afloat. Matamoras was well suited for a blockade-runners' rendezvous. It is on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande River, about forty miles above its mouth. Goods once landed could be shipped in barges and lighters across the river in absolute safety, since heavy batteries prevented the cruisers of the gulf-squadron from entering the river. As a result of this trade, Matamoras became a thriving place. Hundreds of vessels lay in its harbor, where now it is unusual to see five at a time. For four years its streets were crowded with heavy freight vans, while stores and hotels reaped a rich harvest from the sailors of the vessels engaged in the contraband traffic. Now it is as quiet and sleepy a little town as can be found in all the drowsy land of Mexico.

But Nassau was the prime favorite of the blockade-runners. Under protection of the British flag, five hundred miles from Charleston, and but little further from Wilmington, with a harbor well suited for merchantmen, but surrounding waters too shallow for heavy men-of-war, it soon became the chief centre of the illicit trade.

Early in the war the Confederates established a consulate in the little town, and the Stars and Stripes

and the Stars and Bars waved within a few rods of each other. Then great shipping-houses of Liverpool sent over agents, and established branch houses. Great warehouses and wharves were built. Soon huge ocean ships and steamers began unloading their cargoes at these wharves. Then swift, rakish schooners began to drop into the harbor, and after discharging heavy loads of cotton would take on cargoes of English goods, and slip out at nightfall to begin the stealthy dash past the watching gunboats. As the war went on, and the profits of the trade increased with its dangers, a new style of craft began to appear in the little harbor. These were the Clyde built blockade-runners, on which the workmen of the Clyde shipyards had been laboring day and night to get them ready before the war should end. They were long, low, piratical looking craft, with two smoke-stacks raking aft, and with one or two masts for showing signals, for they never hoisted a sail. Two huge paddle-boxes towered above the deck amidships, the wheels being of enormous size. No structure of any kind encumbered the deck. Even the steersman stood unsheltered at the wheel in the bow. They were painted dark gray, and at night could slip unseen along the water within a stone's-throw of the most watchful lookout on a man-of-war. They burned great quantities of a kind of coal that gave out no smoke, and when steaming at night not a light was allowed on board. Sometimes returning agents of the Confederacy from Europe would make the run through the blockading-fleet; so that the blockade-runners were seldom without two or three passengers, poor though their accommodations might be. For the voyage from Nassau to Wilmington, three hundred dollars passage money was charged, or more than fifty cents a mile. To guard against treachery, passage could only be obtained through the Confederate consul,

who carefully investigated the proofs of each applicant's identity before issuing to him a ticket. A soldier going to enlist in one of the Confederate cavalry regiments thus tells the story of his evasion of the blockade.

"After a favorable voyage we reached the desired point off Wilmington at the proper time. A brief stoppage was made, when soon the final preparations were completed for running the gauntlet of the Federal blockaders, who would become visible shortly, as we approached nearer shore. All the lights in the steamer were extinguished, and all passengers ordered below, only the officers and crew being permitted to remain on deck. The furnaces were replenished with carefully selected coal, which would give the greatest amount of heat and the least smoke. The last orders were given, and every man was at his appointed place. Presently the boilers hissed, and the paddle-wheels began to revolve faster and faster, as the fleet little steamer rose higher and higher in the water from the immense force of the rapid strokes; she actually felt like a horse gathering himself up under you for a great leap. After a little while, the few faint sounds from the deck which we could hitherto faintly catch in the cabin ceased altogether, and there was the stillness of death except for the sounds necessarily made by the movements of the machinery. Then we realized that we were running for our lives past the line of cruisers, and that at any moment a big shell might come crashing through our cabin, disagreeably lighting up the darkness in which we were sitting. Our suspense was prolonged for some minutes longer, when the speed was slackened, and finally we stopped altogether. Even then we did not know whether we were safely through the lines, or whether we had been brought to under the guns of a hostile ship, for we could dis-

tinguish nothing whatever through the portholes. However, we were soon released from the cabin, and walked on deck, to find ourselves safely through the blockade. In the offing could be descried several of the now harmless blockaders, and near at hand lay the coast of North Carolina. Soon the gray dawn was succeeded by a brilliant, lovely sunrise, which lighted up cheerfully the low-lying shores and earthworks bristling with artillery, while from a fort near by floated the Southern Cross, the symbol of the glorious cause for which we had come to fight."

One of the most brilliant captures of the war was that of the blockade-runner "Young Republic," by the United States gunboat "Grand Gulf." The "Young Republic" succeeded in evading the watchfulness of the blockading-squadron about the mouth of the Cape Fear River, and under cover of the night ran in safely to the anchorage under the guns of the Confederate forts. The baffled blockaders saw her moving slowly up the river, while the cannon of the forts on either side thundered out salutes to the daring vessel that brought precious supplies to the Confederacy. But the blockading-squadron, though defeated for the time, determined to wait and catch her when she came out. Accordingly the "Grand Gulf," one of the fastest of the United States vessels, was stationed at the mouth of the river, with orders to watch for the "Young Republic." A week passed, and there was no sign of her. At last, one bright day, the lookout in the tops saw the mast and funnel of a steamer moving along above the forest which lined the river's bank. Soon the hull of the vessel came into view; and with a rattle of hawse-chains, her anchors were let fall, and she swung to beneath the protecting guns of the fort. It was clear that she was going to wait there until a dark or foggy night gave her a good chance to slip past

the gunboat that watched the river's mouth as a cat watches the mouth of a mouse-hole. With their marine glasses the officers on the gunboat could see the decks of the "Young Republic" piled high with brown bales of cotton, worth immense sums of money. They thought of the huge value of the prize, and the grand distribution of prize-money, and determined to use every effort to make a capture. Strategy was determined upon, and it was decided to give the blockade-runner the chance to get out of the river that she was awaiting. Accordingly the gunboat steamed away up the coast a few miles, leaving the mouth of the river clear. When hidden by a projecting headland, she stopped and waited for the blockade-runner to come out. The stokers were kept hard at work making the great fires roar, until the steam-gauge showed the highest pressure the boilers could bear. The sailors got out additional sails, clewed up cordage and rigging, and put the ship in order for a fast run. When enough time had elapsed, she steamed out to see if the "Young Republic" had taken the bait. Officers and crew crowded forward to catch the first sight around the headland. The great man-of-war sped through the water. The headland was rounded, and a cheer went up from the crowd of jackies; for there, in the offing, was the blockade-runner, gliding through the water like a dolphin, and steaming for dear life to Nassau. Then the chase began in earnest. The "Young Republic" was one of those long, sharp steamers built on the Clyde expressly for running the blockade. Her crew knew that a long holiday in port, with plenty of money, would follow a successful cruise; and they worked untiringly to keep up the fires, and set every sail so that it would draw. On the cruiser the jackies saw visions of a prize worth a million and a half of dollars; and the thought of so much prize-money to

spend, or to send home, spurred them on. For several hours the chase seemed likely to be a long, stern one; but then the freshening wind filled the sails of the gunboat, and she began to overhaul the fugitive. When within a mile or two, she began firing great shells with her pivot-gun. Then the flying blockade-runner began to show signs of fear; and with a good glass the crew could be seen throwing over bale after bale of the precious cotton, to lighten the vessel. In the last thirty miles of the chase the sea was fairly covered with cotton-bales. More than three hundred were passed floating in the water; and the jackies gnashed their teeth, and growled gruffly, at the sight of so much wealth slipping through their fingers. On the high paddle-wheel box of the blockade-runner, the captain could be seen coolly directing his crew, and now and again turning to take a look through his glass at the pursuer. As the chase continued, the certainty of capture became more and more evident. Then the fugitives began throwing overboard or destroying everything of value: furniture, silverware, chronometers, the fittings of the cabin, everything that could benefit their captors, the chagrined blockade-runners destroyed. The officers of the gunboat saw that if they wished to gain anything by their capture, they must make haste. At the risk of an explosion, more steam was crowded on; and the gunboat was soon alongside the "Young Republic," and in a position to give her an enormous broadside. The blockade-runner saw that he was caught and must submit. For lack of a white flag, a pillow-case was run up to the masthead, and the beating of the great wheels stopped. The davits amidships of the "Grand Gulf" are swung out, and a boat's crew, with a lieutenant and dapper midshipman, climb in. A quick order, "Let fall there," and the boat drops into the water, and is headed for the prize. Another mo-

ment, and the Stars and Stripes supplant the pillow-case waving from the masthead of the "Young Republic." An officer who went into the boiler-room found that the captured crew had planned to blow up the vessel by tying down the safety-valve, so that an enormous pressure of steam strained the boilers almost to bursting. A quick blow of a hatchet, and that danger was done away with. Then, with a prize-crew on board, the "Young Republic" started on her voyage to New York; while the "Grand Gulf" returned to Wilmington to hunt for fresh game.

A curious capture was that of the British schooner "Francis," which was running between Nassau and the coast of Florida. On her last trip she was nearing the coast, when she fell in with a fishing-smack, and was warned that a Federal gunboat was not far away. Still she kept on her course until sundown, when the breeze went down, and she lay becalmed. The gunboat had been steaming into inlets and lagoons all day, and had not sighted the schooner. When night came on, she steamed out into the open sea, within a quarter of a mile of the blockade-runner, and, putting out all lights, lay to for the night. Those on the schooner could see the gunboat, but the lookout on the cruiser did not see the blockade-runner. Soon a heavy fog came up, and entirely hid the vessels from each other. The blockade-runners could only hope that a breeze might spring up, and enable them to escape. But now a curious thing occurred. It almost seems as if two vessels on the ocean exercise a magnetic attraction for each other, so often do collisions occur where there seems room for all the navies of the world to pass in review. So it was this night. The anxious men on the schooner soon found that the two vessels were drifting together, and they were absolutely powerless to prevent it. At midnight, though they could see noth-

ing, they could hear the men on the gunboat talking. Two hours after, the schooner nestled gently up by the side of the gunboat; and a slight jar gave its crew their first intimation that a prize was there, simply waiting to be taken. All they had to do was to climb over the railing. This was promptly done, and the disgusted blockade-runners were sent below as prisoners. Half an hour later came a breeze that would have carried them safely to port.

Sometimes runners were captured through apparently the most trivial accidents. One ship, heavily laden with army supplies, and carrying a large number of passengers, was running through the blockading fleet, and seemed sure of escape. All lights were out, the passengers were in the cabin, not a word was to be heard on deck, even the commands of the officers being delivered in whispers. Suddenly a prolonged cock-crow rent the air, and, with the silence of everything surrounding, sounded like a clarion peal from a trumpet. The deck-hands rushed for a box of poultry on the deck, and dragged out bird after bird, wringing their necks. The true offender was almost the last to be caught, and avenged the deaths of his brothers by crowing vigorously all the time. The noise was enough to alarm the blockaders; and in a moment the hail, "Surrender, or we'll blow you out of water!" brought the unlucky runner to a standstill,—a prisoner. The "Southern Cross" narrowly escaped capture on account of the stupidity of an Irish deck-hand, whose craving for tobacco proved too strong for his discretion. The ship was steaming slyly by two cruisers, and in the darkness would have escaped unseen, when the deck-hand, who had been without a smoke as long as he could stand it, lit a match and puffed away at his pipe. The tiny flame was enough for the cruisers, and they began a spirited cannonade. The "Southern

Cross" ran for her life. The shooting was guess-work, but the gunners on the cruisers showed all the proverbial Yankee skill at guessing. The first ball carried away the roof of the pilot-house, and the second ripped away the railing along the deck for thirty feet. But the captain was plucky, and made a run for it. He was forced to pass within a hundred feet of one of the cruisers; and as he saw the muzzles of the great guns bearing on his ships, he heard the command, "Heave to, or I'll sink you." But he took his chances, and escaped with only the damage caused by a solid shot crashing through the hull.

One of the strangest experiences of all was that of the captain of a blockade-runner putting in to Wilmington one bitter cold night, when the snow was blowing in clouds, and the fingers of the men at the wheel and the sailors on watch were frostbitten. The runner had reached the harbor safely; but there in channel lay a blockader in such a position that any ship coming in must pass within a hundred feet of her. The Confederate had a light-draught vessel, and tried to squeeze through. When he passed the gunboat, only twelve feet of space separated the two vessels; and he saw a lookout, with his arms on the rail, looking right at the passing vessel. The Confederate expected an immediate alarm, but it did not come. Wondering at the cause, but happy in his luck, he sped on, and gained the harbor safely. Some days after, he learned that the lookout was a dead man, frozen at his post of duty.

It will readily be understood that the inducements offered to blockade-runners must have been immense to persuade men to run such risks. The officers and sailors made money easily, and spent it royally when they reached Nassau. "I never expect to see such flush times again in my life," said a blockade-running

captain, speaking of Nassau. "Money was as plentiful as dirt. I have seen a man toss up a twenty-dollar gold piece on 'heads or tails,' and it would be followed by a score of the yellow boys in five seconds. There were times when the bank-vaults could not hold all the gold, and the coins were dumped down by the bushel, and guarded by soldiers. Men wagered, gambled, drank, and seemed crazy to get rid of their money. I once saw two captains bet five hundred dollars each on the length of a certain porch. Again I saw a wager of eight hundred dollars a side as to how many would be at the dinner-table of a certain hotel. The Confederates were paying the English big prices for goods, but multiplying the figures by five, seven, and ten as soon as the goods were landed in Charleston. Ten dollars invested in quinine in Nassau would bring from four hundred to six hundred dollars in Charleston. A pair of four-dollar boots would bring from fourteen to sixteen dollars; a two-dollar hat would bring eight dollars, and so on through all the list of goods brought in. Every successful captain might have made a fortune in a year; but it is not believed that five out of the whole number had a thousand dollars on hand when the war closed. It was come easy, go easy."

CHAPTER XIX

The Trent Affair—Narrow Escape from War with England—
Cushing and His Exploits—Destruction of the "Albemarle"—
Loss of the "Harriet Lane."

DURING the course of the Civil War many incidents occurred, some semi-political and others purely political, widely separated in point of time or place, and bearing no relation one to the other. But each had a distinct influence on the progress of the war, and all may be most conveniently described together in a single chapter.

Early in the war the rash, though well-intended act of a navy officer, Captain Wilkes, brought Great Britain to the very point of interference as an ally of the Confederate States—an event which would have made the ultimate triumph of the Northern arms more than doubtful. The Confederates always seeking recognition abroad as a belligerent nation, which they never won, were sending to London two diplomatic envoys, Messrs. Mason and Slidell. These gentlemen having reached Havana on a blockade runner, talked freely there about their mission while waiting for a British steamer. In the harbor was the United States man-of-war "San Jacinto," whose commander, Captain Wilkes, determined to board the British steamer and take from it by force the two envoys. Such an act was clearly a violation of international law, and an affront to the rights and dignity of the British flag. Nevertheless, the British mail steamer "Trent" was intercepted in the Bahama Channel by the United States warship which fired a blank cartridge as a signal to heave to. The commander of the "Trent" ran the

British flag to the peak, and continued, feeling secure under the emblem of neutrality. Then came a more peremptory summons in the shape of a solid shot across the bows; and, as the incredulous captain of the "Trent" still continued his course, a six-inch shell was dropped within about one hundred feet of his vessel. Then he stopped. A boat put off from the "San Jacinto," and made for the "Trent." Up the side of the merchant-vessel clambered a spruce lieutenant, and demanded the immediate surrender of the two commissioners. The captain protested, pointed to the flag with the cross of St. George waving above his head, and invoked the power of her Britannic majesty,—all to no avail. The two commissioners had retired to their cabins, and refused to come out without being compelled by actual force. The boat was sent back to the "San Jacinto," and soon returned with a file of marines, who were drawn up with their muskets on the deck of the "Trent." Every British ship which carries mails carries a regularly commissioned officer of the navy, who is responsible for them. This officer on the "Trent" was somewhat of a martinet, and his protests at this violation of the rights of a neutral vessel were very vigorous. When the first gun was fired, he rushed below, and soon reappeared in all the resplendent glory of gold lace and brass buttons which go to make up a naval uniform. He danced about the deck in an ecstasy of rage, and made the most fearful threats of the wrath of the British people. The passengers too became excited, and protested loudly. Everything possible was done by the people of the "Trent" to put themselves on record as formally protesting. Nevertheless, the commissioners were taken away, carried to New York, and from there sent into confinement at Fort Warren.

When the news of this achievement became known,

Wilkes was made the lion of the hour. Unthinking people met and passed resolutions of commendation. He was tendered banquets by cities. He was elected a member of learned societies in all parts of the country, and was generally eulogized. Even the Secretary of the Navy, who should have recognized the grave troubles likely to grow out of this violation of the principles of neutrality, wrote a letter to Captain Wilkes, warmly indorsing his course, and only regretting that he had not captured the steamer as well as the two commissioners.

But fortunately we had wiser heads in the other executive departments of the government. President Lincoln and Secretary Seward quickly disavowed all responsibility for Wilkes's action. Letters were written to the United States minister in England, Charles Francis Adams, alluding to the proceeding as one for which Captain Wilkes as an individual was alone responsible. And well it was that this attitude was taken: for hardly had the news reached England, when with one voice the people cried for war. Sympathizing with the South as the governing classes undoubtedly did, it needed but this insult to the British flag to rouse the war spirit of the nation. Transports loaded with troops were immediately ordered to Canada; the reserves were called out; the ordnance factories were set running day and night; while the press of the nation, and the British minister at Washington, demanded the immediate release of the captives, and a full apology from the United States.

The matter was conducted on this side with the utmost diplomacy. We were undoubtedly in the wrong, and the only thing was to come out with as little sacrifice of national dignity as possible. The long time necessary for letters to pass between this country and England was an important factor in calming the

people. Minister Adams said, that, had the Atlantic cable then been in operation, nothing could have prevented a war. In the end the demands of Great Britain were acceded to, and the commissioners proceeded on their way. The last note of the diplomatic correspondence was a courteous letter from President Lincoln to the British minister, offering to allow the British troops *en route* for Canada to land at Portland, Me., and thus avoid the long winter's march through New Brunswick. The peaceful settlement of the affair chagrined the Confederates not a little, as they had hoped to gain Great Britain as a powerful ally in their fight against the United States.

The blockade and occupation of the North Carolina sounds, to which extended reference has already been made, developed early in the war a naval hero whose name became almost a household word. Debarred any very high rank because of his early death, the dash and recklessness of Lieutenant W. B. Cushing made him for a time the most talked of man in the navy. He entered the service when about nineteen years old, a tall, dark, slim, smooth-faced stripling. He must have distinguished himself early, for in 1862 he was in command of the steamer "Ellis" at New River Inlet. Here, to relieve the monotony of the blockade, he made frequent raids into the Confederate territory, usually seeking to find and destroy salt works, for the scarcity of salt due to the rigidity of the blockade was already one of the chief hardships of the Southern people. In one of these he lost his ship and narrowly escaped losing his crew as well. The "Ellis" had made a raid on Jacksonville, a little town thirty-five miles up a narrow stream, flowing through well-populated Confederate territory. No salt works were found, but some arms were seized and a blockade-runner laden with cotton and turpentine burned. Another schooner

was seized, and with it in tow the "Ellis" started back. But now the neighboring Confederates were roused, sharpshooters lined the bank, and at one point a small battery opened fire, but the Confederates were quickly driven from their guns. A night was spent at anchor, lanterns flashing on shore, and signals showing that the enemy were preparing to "bag" the beleaguered Yankees in the morning. And that morning brought the crowning stroke of bad luck.

Soon after daylight, the pilot, mistaking the channel, ran the ship so solidly aground that there was clearly no hope of extricating her. All this time she had been towing one of the captured schooners; and Cushing, with quick decisiveness, ordered that everything should be removed from the "Ellis" to the schooner. This was quickly done, leaving nothing but the great pivot-gun aboard.

But even when so greatly lightened, the ship would not float, and Cushing saw that all was lost. As a final expedient he sent a boat's crew back after the cannon that the enemy had abandoned the day before, intending to construct a land-battery with them, and so keep his ship. But the Confederates had already removed the guns, so this forlorn hope failed. Orders were then given for the crew to take the schooner, and drop down the river for a mile or two. The young captain expressed his intention of remaining aboard his craft, and asked for six volunteers to help him fight the pivot-gun. They were quickly found; and, while the remainder of the crew dropped down the river in the schooner, the devoted little band calmly awaited the beginning of the attack. They did not have long to wait. Soon a cannon boomed from the bank, and a heavy shell whizzed over their heads. Then another, from another direction, and a third, and a fourth, each from a distinct battery. They were hopeless odds,

yet Cushing and his command fought on until the gunners, getting the range, dropped shot after shot into the doomed vessel. Then fire broke out in three or four places. This was too much; and the seven daring men took to a small boat, and rowed to the schooner. First, however, they loaded the long gun, and turned it on the enemy, in order, as Cushing said, "that she might fight for herself when we could do so no longer." Once in the schooner, they sailed rapidly down the river; and just as they reached the sound a deep boom announced that the fire had reached the magazine, and the "Ellis" was blown into a million pieces. Daring as this adventure was, Cushing was much distressed at its termination; and in his official report he asks for a general court of inquiry, to determine whether he had properly upheld the honor of the nation's flag.

But the crowning achievement of Cushing's career—his lesser adventures would fill a respectable volume—was in the late years of the war.

Early in the spring of 1863 it became evident to the officers of the Union squadron in the sounds, that the Confederates were making arrangements to drive the Yankee ships from those waters, and to reopen the coasting-trade to the people of North Carolina. The chief source of alarm to the fleet was a heavy iron-clad which was reported to be building on the Roanoke River above Plymouth. Full descriptions of this vessel were in the hands of the Union officers; and they saw clearly that, should she be completed, no vessel of the sound squadron, nor perhaps the entire navy, would be able to do battle against her successfully. The river was too shallow for the war-vessels to go up to the point where the ram was being built, and the channel at Hatteras Inlet was not deep enough for iron-clads to be brought in to compete with the enemy when

finished. The naval authorities repeatedly urged the army to send an expedition to burn the boat; but Major-General Foster, in command of the department of North Carolina, declared it was of no importance, as the Confederates would never put it to any use. Time showed a very different state of affairs. In April, 1864, the ram was completed, and named the "Albemarle." Her first work was to co-operate with ten thousand Confederate troops in the recapture of Plymouth, which was accomplished with very little difficulty. Lieutenant Flusser was at Plymouth with four small gunboats, and remained bravely at his post as he saw the powerful ram bearing down upon him. It was half-past three in the morning, and the chill, gray dawn was just breaking over the earth. Above the river hung a mist, through which the great body of the ram could be seen coming doggedly down to the conflict. The "Miami" and "Southfield" were lashed together; and, at the order of Commander Flusser, they started to meet the iron-clad, firing quickly and with good aim. The "Albemarle" came on silently, disdaining to fire a gun. With a crash she struck the "Miami" a glancing blow on the port-bow, gouging off two great planks. Sliding past the wounded craft, she plunged into the "Southfield," crushing completely through her side, so that she began to settle at once. The lashings between the gunboats parted, and the "Southfield" sank rapidly, carrying part of her crew with her. As the "Albemarle" crashed into the two vessels, she fired her bow-gun several times, killing and wounding many of the Union sailors, and killing Lieutenant Flusser. When she turned and made a second dash for the "Miami," the latter fled down the stream, knowing that to dare the power of the enemy was mere madness. The "Albemarle" steamed back to Plymouth, and by

her aid the town was easily recaptured by the Confederates.

The squadron in the sounds was now in a state of the greatest anxiety. At any moment the impregnable monster might descend the river and destroy the frail wooden gunboats at her leisure. Preparations were made for a desperate battle when the time should come. Captains were instructed to bring their ships to close quarters with the enemy and to endeavor to throw powder or shells down her smoke-stack. Every possible means by which a wooden steamer might cope with an iron-clad was provided.

On the 5th of May the ram put in an appearance, steaming down the river. Deliberately she approached within easy range, then let fly a shot at the "Mattabesett" which knocked her launch to pieces and wounded several men. The "Mattabesett" ran up to within one hundred and fifty yards of the "Albemarle," and gave her a broadside of solid shot from nine-inch Dahlgrens and one-hundred-pounder rifles. When these shot struck a sloping place on the ram's armor, they glanced off. Those that struck full on the plating simply crumbled to pieces, leaving no dent to tell of the blow. One beautifully aimed shot struck the muzzle of one of the cannon on the ram and broke it. The gun was used throughout the fight, however, as the "Albemarle" carried but two and could not spare one of them. The "Sassacus" followed in line of battle. She delivered her broadside in passing. The ram rushed madly at her, but was evaded by good steering. Then the "Sassacus" in turn rushed at the ram at full speed, thinking to run her down. She struck amidships at right angles, and with the crash of the collision came a hundred-pound shot from the ram, that passed through the wooden ship from end to end. Still the engines of the "Sassacus" were kept

going, in the hope of pushing the "Albemarle" beneath the water. The iron-clad careened slowly, the water washed over her after-deck; the crew of the "Sassacus," far out on the bow, tried vainly to drop shells and packages of powder down the ram's smoking chimneys. It was a moment of intense excitement. But the ram was too much for her assailant. Recovering from the shock of the collision, she slowly swung around until her bow-gun could be brought to bear on her tormenter, when she let fly a ponderous bolt. It crashed through the side of the steamer and plunged into her boiler. In an instant hot, scalding steam filled the engine-room and spread over the whole ship. Cries of agony arose on every side. Twenty-one of the crew were terribly scalded. Nothing remained but retreat; and the "Sassacus" steamed away from her enemy, after making one of the bravest fights in naval history. In the meantime the other gunboats were pounding away at the ram. The "Miami" was trying in vain to get an opportunity to discharge a large torpedo. Two other vessels were spreading nets about the great ship, trying to foul the propeller. The action continued until dark, when the ram withdrew, uninjured and without losing a man. She had fought alone for three hours against six ships, and had seriously damaged every one of her adversaries. It must also be remembered that she carried but two guns.

The "Albemarle" lay for a long time idle at her moorings in Roanoke River, feeling sure that at her own pleasure she could go into the sounds, and complete the destruction of the fleet. Lieutenant Cushing, then twenty-one years old, begged permission to attempt to destroy her. The authority was gladly granted by the navy department, and Cushing began making his plans for the adventure. His first plan was to take a squad of men, with two steam-launches, up the Roan-

oke, and blow the ram up by means of a torpedo. The launches were sent from New York, but one was swamped while crossing Delaware Bay.

Cushing, however, was not the man to be balked by an accident: so, cutting down his force one-half, he prepared for the start. Thirteen officers and men made up the little party which seemed bound to certain death. The spirit which animated the blue-jackets during the war may be imagined from the fact that many sailors tried to purchase the privilege of going on this perilous expedition, by offering their month's pay to those who had been selected. To understand what a forlorn hope the little boat-load of men were cherishing, we must understand what were the defences of the "Albemarle." She lay at a broad wharf, on which was encamped a large guard of soldiers as well as her crew. Above and below her, great fires were kept burning on the shores, to prevent any boat approaching unseen. She was surrounded by a boom, or "water-fence," of floating logs, about thirty feet from her hull, to keep off any torpedo-boats. From the mouth of the Roanoke to her moorings was about eight miles; the shores being lined on either side by pickets, and a large picket-station being established in mid-stream about one mile below Plymouth.

To attempt to penetrate this network of defences seemed to be foolhardy. Yet Cushing's record for dash and courage, and his enthusiasm, inspired his comrades with confidence; and they set out feeling certain of success. On the night of the 27th of October, the daring band, in their pygmy steamer, steamed rapidly up the river. No word was spoken aboard. The machinery was oiled until it ran noiselessly; and not a light shone from the little craft, save when the furnace-door was hastily opened to fire up. The Confederate sentries on the bank saw nothing of the party;

and, even when they passed the picket schooners near the wreck of the "Southfield," they were unchallenged, although they could see the schooners, and hear the voices of the men, not more than twenty yards away. Not until they came into the fitful glare of the firelight were they seen, and then quick hails came from the sentries on the wharf and the "Albemarle's" decks. But the light on the shore aided the adventurers by showing them the position of the ram. They dashed up alongside, amid a shower of bullets that seemed to fill the air. On the decks of the ram all was confusion, the alarm rattles were sprung, the bell rung violently. The launch running alongside came into contact with the row of logs, and sheered off to make a dash over it. Cushing, who on these dangerous expeditions was like a schoolboy on a holiday, answered with ridicule all hails. "Go ashore for your lives," "Surrender yourselves, or I shall sink you," he cried, as the gunners on the ram trained a heavy gun on the little launch. Now she was headed straight for the ram, and had a run of thirty yards before striking the boom. She reached, and dashed over. Cushing, standing in the stern, held in one hand the tiller ropes, in the other the lanyard of the torpedo. He looked up, saw the muzzle of a heavy gun trained directly on his boat: one convulsive pull of the rope, and with a roar the torpedo exploded under the hull of the "Albemarle," just as a hundred-pound shot crashed through the bottom of his boat. In a second the launch had disappeared; her crew were struggling in the waves, or lying dead beneath them, and the "Albemarle," with a mortal wound, was sinking to the bottom.

Cushing swam to the middle of the river, and headed down stream. Most of his companions were killed, captured, or drowned. In the middle of the stream he met Woodman, who had followed him on previous

expeditions. Woodman was almost exhausted. Cushing supported him as long as he was able, but was forced to leave him, and the sailor sank to the bottom. The young lieutenant floated down the river until at last he reached the shore, exhausted and faint from a wound in his wrist. He lay half-covered with water in a swamp until daylight. While there he heard two Confederate officers who passed say that the "Albemarle" was a total wreck. That news gave him new energy, and he set about getting safely away. Through the thick undergrowth of the swamp he crawled for some hours, until he found a negro who gave him shelter and food. Then he plunged again into the swamp, and walked on until he captured a skiff from a Rebel picket; and with this he safely reached the fleet,—the only one of the thirteen who set out two days before.

While such individual exploits were being performed on the Atlantic Coast, the Gulf was the scene of some notable deeds of high daring by both Union and Confederate sailors. One was done at Pensacola by sailors of the United States frigate "Colorado," which was blockading that port. From the decks of the ship officers with glasses could see a small schooner lying near the navy-yard, evidently being fitted out as a privateer. They determined to cut her out, or at least destroy her. It was not an adventure to be undertaken lightly. One thousand men were in the navy-yard ready to spring to the schooner's defence. A ten-inch columbiad and a twelve-pounder field piece were so mounted on the dock as to sweep her decks should an enemy gain them. Fort Pensacola not far distant was full of Confederate troops. Nevertheless, the Union officers determined upon the attempt.

Accordingly, on the first dark night, four boats, containing one hundred officers, sailors, and marines, put

off from the side of the "Colorado," and headed for the town. All was done with the most perfect silence. The tholes of the oars were wrapped in cloth to deaden their rattle in the rowlocks. No lights were carried. Not a word was spoken after the officers in muffled tones had given the order, "Give way." Through the darkness of the night the heavy boats glide on. Every man aboard has his work laid out for him, and each knows what he is to do. While the main body are to be engaged in beating back the guards, some are to spike the guns, and others to fire the schooner in several places. When within a hundred yards of the schooner, they are discovered by the sentry. As his ringing hail comes over the water, the sailors make no reply, but bend to the oars, and the boats fairly leap toward the wharf. Bang! goes the sentry's rifle; and the men in the hold of the schooner come rushing up just as the two boats dash against her side, and the sailors spring like cats over the bulwarks. One man was found guarding the guns on the wharf, and was shot down. Little time is needed to spike the guns, and then those on the wharf turn in to help their comrades on the schooner. Here the fighting is sharp and hand to hand. Nearly a hundred men are crowded on the deck, and deal pistol-shots and cutlass-blows right and left. Several of the crew of the schooner have climbed into the tops, and from that point of vantage pour down on the attacking party a murderous fire. Horrid yells go up from the enraged combatants, and the roar of the musketry is deafening. The crew of the schooner are forced backward, step by step, until at last they are driven off the vessel altogether, and stand on the wharf delivering a rapid fire. The men from the navy-yard are beginning to pour down to the wharf to take a hand in the fight. But now a column of smoke begins to arise from the open com-

panionway; and the blue-jackets see that their work is done, and tumble over the side into their boats. It is high time for them to leave, for the Confederates are on the wharf in overwhelming force. As they stand there, crowded together, the retiring sailors open on them with canister from two howitzers in the boats. Six rounds of this sort of firing sends the Confederates looking for shelter; and the sailors pull off through the darkness to their ship, there to watch the burning vessel, until, with a sudden burst of flame, she is blown to pieces.

Considering the dashing nature of this exploit, the loss of life was wonderfully small. Lieutenant Blake, who commanded one of the boats, was saved by one of those strange accidents so common in war. As he was going over the side of the "Colorado," some one handed him a metal flask filled with brandy, to be used for the wounded. He dropped it into the lower pocket of his overcoat, but finding it uncomfortable there, changed it to the side pocket of his coat, immediately over his heart. When the boats touched the side of the schooner, Blake was one of the first to spring into the chains and clamber aboard. Just as he was springing over the gunwale, a Confederate sailor pointed a pistol at his heart, and fired it just as Blake cut him down with a savage cutlass-stroke. The bullet sped true to its mark, but struck the flask, and had just enough force to perforate it, without doing any injury to the lieutenant.

A Gulf city that had been in the hands of the Union forces since the early days of the war was Galveston, Texas. The people of the town and of the surrounding country were strong secessionists, and the three regiments of infantry stationed there would have been quite inadequate to hold the town had it not been for the three gunboats anchored in the harbor, whose big

guns had a quieting effect on the discontented citizens. But it had long been rumored that a determined effort would be made to destroy or drive away the ships and retake Galveston for the Confederacy. Accordingly, when, on January 1, 1863, the lookout on the "Harrriet Lane," one of the Union ships, saw a black cloud of smoke coming down the river he instantly suspected an attack and gave the alarm.

In a moment the roll of the drums made the sailors below spring from their hammocks, and, hastily throwing on their clothes, rush on deck. The drums beat to quarters, and the crew were soon at their guns. Over the water came the roll of the drums from the other ships, and from the troops on shore, now all aroused and in arms. For thirty hours the Federals had been expecting this attack, and now they were fully prepared for it.

The attacking vessels came nearer, and the men on the Union ships strained their eyes to see by the faint starlight what manner of craft they had to meet. They proved to be two large river-steamships, piled high with cotton-bales, crowded with armed men, and provided with a few field pieces. Clearly they were only dangerous at close quarters, and the "Lane" at once began a rapid fire to beat them back. But the bad light spoiled her gunners' aim, and she determined to rush upon the enemy, and run him down. The Confederate captain managed his helm skilfully, and the "Lane" struck only a glancing blow. Then, in her turn, the "Lane" was rammed by the Confederate steamer, which plunged into her with a crash and a shock which seemed almost to lift the ships out of water. The two vessels drifted apart, the "Lane" hardly injured, but the Confederate with a gaping wound in his bow which sent him to the bottom in fifteen minutes. But now the other Confederate came

bearing down under a full head of steam, and crashed into the "Lane." Evidently the Confederates wanted to fight in the old style; for they threw out grappling-irons, lashed the two ships side to side, and began pouring on to the deck of the Federal ship for a hand-to-hand conflict. Cries of anger and pain, pistol-shots, cutlass blows, and occasional roars from the howitzers rose on the night air, and were answered by the sounds of battle from the shore, where the Confederates had attacked the slender Union garrison. The sinking steamer took up a position near the "Lane," and poured broadside after broadside upon the struggling Union ship. But where were the other three Union vessels all this time? It seemed as though their commanders had lost all their coolness; for they ran their vessels here and there, now trying to do something to help their friends on shore, now making an ineffectual attempt to aid the "Harriet Lane." But on board that vessel matters were going badly for the Federals. The Confederates in great numbers kept pouring over the bulwarks, and were rapidly driving the crew from the deck. Captain Wainwright lay dead at the door of the cabin. Across his body stood his young son, his eyes blazing, his hair waving in the wind. He held in his right hand a huge revolver, which he was firing without aim into the tossing mass of struggling men before him, while he called on his dead father to rise and help him. A stray bullet cut off two of his fingers, and the pain was too much for the little hero only ten years old; and, dropping the pistol, he burst into tears, crying, "Do you want to kill me?" The blue-jackets began to look anxiously for help toward the other vessels. But, even while they looked, they saw all hope of help cut off; for with a crash and a burst of flame the "Westfield" blew up. It turned out later, that, finding his ship aground, the captain of the

"Westfield" had determined to abandon her, and fire the magazine; but in fixing his train he made a fatal error, and the ship blew up, hurling captain and crew into the air. The men on the "Harriet Lane" saw that all hope was gone, and surrendered their ship. When the captains of the two remaining gunboats saw the Stars and Stripes fall from the peak, they turned their vessels' prows toward the sea, and scudded out of danger of capture. At the same moment, cheers from the gray-coats on shore told that the Confederates had been successful both by land and sea, and the Stars and Bars once more floated over Galveston.

CHAPTER XX

On Inland Waters—The River Gunboats—U. S. Grant at Belmont—
Capture of Forts Henry and Donelson—Northern Line of the
Confederacy Broken—Stubborn Defense of Island No. 10—A
New Channel for the Mighty River—Running the Gauntlet.

No more effective service was rendered by the United States navy than on the inland rivers, and the gallantry and dash of the Southern people was nowhere more strikingly shown than on those great waterways which they had come to look upon as peculiarly their own. In the Eastern States the rivers were usually a hindrance to the progress of the Northern arms, for flowing as they do from west to east, they had to be crossed by the armies making southward. But in the West the rolling Mississippi furnished a royal pathway for the Union troops in their invasion of Southern territory, while such of its tributaries as the Tennessee, Cumberland, and Red Rivers afforded opportunity to take troops expeditiously into the heart of the Confederacy, and to keep them supplied with munitions of war. The Confederates were not blind to the peril involved in the topography of their country, and had early begun the fortification of their rivers. The Union naval and military base was at Cairo, Illinois, situated at the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. South of that point every river was lined with Confederate batteries, supported by gunboats, for only on the inland waters did the Confederate naval force in any way compare with that of the Union. At the mouth of the Mississippi, Forts Jackson and St. Philip long held back the wistful blue-jackets eager to steam up to the rich prize, New Orleans. Thousands of

miles to the northward, almost at the line of the Ohio River, were heavy batteries at Columbus and at Belmont on the western side of the river. Further down was Island No. 10, in the centre of the rushing, turbid flood, where some of the most powerful defensive works then known to military science had been erected. The Cumberland River was guarded by Fort Donelson; the Tennessee by Fort Henry. Fort Pillow frowned above the city of Memphis. The works at Vicksburg equalled those with which Sebastopol so long defied the allied armies of Europe. All the way from Cairo to New Orleans were batteries, earthworks, and watchful gunboats.

Naturally, the first task of the navy authorities was the creation of a fleet. Its beginnings were small, but before the end of the war no less than one hundred Union gunboats floated on the Mississippi and its tributaries. At first they were mere remodelled river steamers, flimsy, unarmored, with bulwarks that would hardly stop a rifle bullet. But early in July, 1861, contracts for seven iron-clad gunboats were let to James B. Eads, the distinguished engineer, who later built the jetties at the mouth of the Mississippi and the great bridge at St. Louis. The craft were to carry fifteen guns; to be protected by two and one-half-inch iron plating and draw not more than six feet of water. All were to be completed within sixty-five days. It was no light task, but was completed in time. Squat, ugly, dark within and dismal without, the vessels seemed to look the part they had to play—that of malign monsters breathing forth smoke and flame and spreading destruction and death over land and water.

The first service of the inland navy after a few insignificant skirmishes was a useful, if not particularly notable one. A small force of Union troops under General U. S. Grant, then unknown to fame, made a

river expedition from Cairo to destroy the Confederate battery at Belmont, on the Missouri side of the river. The enemy's camp was not fortified, and was speedily in the hands of the assailants, who begun its destruction and disarmament. But the commotion attracted the attention of the commander of the heavier Confederate works across the river, who at once turned his guns on the victors. They were quickly thrown into confusion, and the Confederates who had fled in the first surprise reformed and made a determined attempt to recapture their battery and prevent the escape of Grant's force. But now came the turn of the gunboats. Their shells and shrapnel ploughed through the lines of the enemy. while the rifles and light field artillery of the foe had no effect on the iron plating of the vessels. Under cover of this fire the Union troops retreated to their transports and were soon safe in Cairo. A disaster that would have discouraged the Western forces in the very first days of the war was averted.

In surveying the work of the navy on inland waters it must be kept in mind that it was almost invariably conducted in connection with the army. The gunboats were reducing batteries that transports might pass safely; engaging forts while a land attack was in progress, or keeping rivers open that the distributing of rations and munitions of war might be uninterrupted. The work of the armies is a long story in itself, and must be ignored here, except in so far as reference to it is necessary to make intelligible the work of the men afloat.

In February, 1862, General Grant determined to strike the first blow for the opening of the Confederacy by capturing, or destroying, Fort Henry on the Tennessee River. The moment was propitious. The earthworks forming the fort had been planned on a formidable scale, but were only half completed and

less than half armed. At many points it was wide open to artillery fire from the river or from the opposite bank. Grant's plan involved a frontal attack from the river by Commodore A. H. Foote and seven gunboats, four armored, while the troops should be landed below the fort and attack it from the rear. Foote on hearing the plan quietly remarked that the fort would surrender to his guns before the troops could reach it, which proved to be the case. General Tilghman, in command of the defenders realized the hopelessness of his situation when he heard of the Federal advance and sent four-fifths of his garrison across country to Fort Donelson, desiring to expose as few men as possible to the risk of capture.

At daybreak on a chill February morning the Union troops took up their march through the dripping woods, while the gunboats cast off and steamed up the river. The four iron-clads led, steaming abreast. About a mile in the rear, came the three wooden vessels. The fort was soon in range; but both parties seemed anxious for a determined conflict, and no shot was fired on either side as the gunboats came sullenly on. How different must have been the feelings of the two combatants! Tilghman, with his handful of men, hardly able to work eight of the eleven guns mounted in his fort, and knowing that his defeat was a mere question of time; Foote, with his iron-clads and supporting gunboats, his seventy-two guns, and his knowledge that six thousand men were marching upon the rear of the Confederate works. On the one side, all was absolute certainty of defeat; on the other, calm confidence of victory.

When the flotilla was within a third of a mile of the fort, the fire began. The gunners on the ships could see the muzzles of the Confederate guns, the piles of shells and cannon-balls, and the men at their



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FARRAGUT'S FLEET ENGAGING THE ENEMY NEAR NEW ORLEANS, APRIL 26, 1862

work. The firing on both sides was deliberate and deadly. The Confederates were new to the work, but they proved themselves good marksmen. The first shot was fired from the shore, and, missing the "Essex" by but a few feet, plumped into the water, so near the next ship in line as to throw water over her decks. Within five minutes, the "Essex" and the "Cincinnati" were both hit. The armor of the gunboats proved no match for the shots of the Confederates, and in many cases it was penetrated. In some instances, shells, entering through the portholes, did deadly damage.

On the shore, the shells from the gunboats were doing terrible work. Banks of solid earth, eight feet thick, were blown away by the explosions. One, bursting in front of a ten-inch columbiad, filled that powerful gun with mud almost to the muzzle, disabling it for the remainder of the fight. A shot from the "Essex" struck the muzzle of a great gun, ripped off a splinter of iron three feet long, and crushed a gunner to pulp. The gun was just about to be fired, and burst, killing or wounding every man of the crew. At the same moment a shell crashed through the side of the "Essex," killing men right and left: took off the head of a sailor standing by Captain Porter, wounded the captain, and plunged into the boiler. In an instant the ship was filled with scalding steam. The men in the pilot-house were suffocated. Twenty men and officers were killed or scalded. The ship was disabled, and drifted out of the fight. While withdrawing, she received two more shots, making twenty in all that had fallen to her share in this hot engagement. But by this time the fort was very thoroughly knocked to pieces. The big twenty-four-pounder was dismounted, and five of its crew killed. Gun after gun was keeled over, and man after man carried bleeding to the bomb-

proofs, until General Tilghman himself dropped coat and sword, and pulled away at a gun by the side of his soldiers. Receiving ten shots while they could only fire one, this little band held out for two long hours; and only when the crew of the last remaining piece threw themselves exhausted on the ground, did the flag come fluttering down. General Tilghman went to the fleet and surrendered the fort to Commodore Foote, and Grant's army came up more than an hour after the battle was over. To the navy belongs the honor of taking Fort Henry, while to General Tilghman and his plucky soldiers belongs the honor of making one of the most desperate fights under the most unfavorable circumstances recorded in the history of the Civil War.

The fall of Fort Henry opened the way for the Union advance to Fort Donelson, and marked the first step of the United States Government toward regaining control of the Mississippi. It broke the northern battle-line of the Confederacy, and never again was that line re-established.

Within a few hours after the fall of Fort Henry three of Foote's gunboats were steaming up the Tennessee to examine the surrounding country. A railroad bridge with shattered draw delayed them for a time, but was finally passed by the "Conestoga" and "Lexington." Their advance spread panic among the Confederates. Two steamers loaded with munitions of war were deserted by their crews and burned. An almost completed iron-clad ram, the "Eastport," was captured and made part of the Union fleet, and great quantities of lumber and ship-timber were seized. When the head of navigation was reached the invaders put about and returned to Cairo, to find Grant and Foote about ready to proceed against Fort Donelson. This fortification was one strongly relied upon by the

Confederates for the maintenance of their northern line of battle. It was on the bank of the Cumberland River, nearly opposite the site of Fort Henry on the Tennessee. A garrison of at least fifteen thousand men manned the works, and were commanded by no less than three generals; and the fact that there were *three* generals in command had much to do with the fall of the fort. Its strength was rather on its river-front. Here the river winds about between abrupt hillsides, and on the front of one of these hills stood Fort Donelson. The water-batteries were made up of heavy guns, so mounted as to command the river for miles. On the landward side were heavy earthworks, abatis, and sharp pointed *chevaux-de-frise*.

Against this fortress Grant led an army of eighteen thousand men, and Foote directed his flotilla of gunboats. But the honors this time were destined to fall to the army, the riverside batteries of the fort proving impregnable. It was the 13th of April when the gunboat "Carondelet" opened the attack. This vessel had reached the scene of action before the rest of the flotilla, and by order of the army commander tested the strength of the fort by a day's cannonade. She stationed herself about a mile from the batteries, at a spot where she would be somewhat protected by a jutting point, and began a deliberate cannonade with her bow-guns. One hundred and thirty shots went whizzing from her batteries against the front of the Confederate batteries, without doing any serious damage. Then came an iron ball weighing one hundred and twenty pounds, fired from a heavy gun, which burst through one of her portholes, and scattered men bleeding and mangled in every direction over the gun-deck. She withdrew a short distance for repairs, but soon returned, and continued the fire the remainder of the day. When evening fell, she had sent one hun-

dred and eighty shells at the fort, with the result of killing one man. This was not promising.

The next day the attack was taken up by all the gunboats. The distance chosen this time was four hundred yards, and the fight was kept up most stubbornly. It was St. Valentine's Day; and as the swarthy sailors, stripped to the waist, begrimed with powder, and stained with blood, rammed huge iron balls down the muzzles of the guns, they said with grim pleasantry, "There's a valentine for the gray-coats." And right speedily did the gray-coats return the gift. Shot and shell from the batteries came in volleys against the sides of the gunboats. In the fort the condition of affairs was not serious. The shells chiefly fell in the soft earth of the hilltop above, and embedded themselves harmlessly in the mud. One of the gunners after the fight said: "We were more bothered by flying mud than anything else. A shell bursting up there would throw out great clots of clay, that blocked up the touch-holes of our guns, spoiled the priming of our shells, and plastered up the faces of our men. Of course, now and then a bit of shell would knock some poor fellow over; but, though we were all green hands at war, we expected to see lots more blood and carnage than the Yankee gunboats dealt out to us."

The gunboats, however, had put themselves in a hot place. Twenty heavy guns on the hillside high above were hurling solid shot down on the little fleet. The sailors stuck to their work well; and though the vessels were in a fair way of being riddled, they succeeded in driving the enemy from his lower battery. But the upper battery was impregnable; and the gunners there, having got the correct range, were shooting with unpleasant precision. Two of the vessels were disabled by being struck in the steering-chains. On the "Carondelet" a piece burst, hurling its crew bleeding on the

deck. No vessel escaped with less than twenty wounds, while the flagship was hit fifty-nine times. Commodore Foote was wounded in the foot by a heavy splinter; a wound from which he never fully recovered, and which for some years debarred him from service afloat.

That afternoon's bombardment showed clearly that Fort Donelson could never be taken by the navy. When Foote ordered his gunboats to cease firing and drop back out of position, the Confederates swarmed back into the lower battery that they had abandoned; and, after a few hours' work, the fort was as strong as before the fight.

The fort surrendered two days later because its close investment by the Union army made its subjection to starvation only a matter of brief time.

Thus far the work of driving southward the Confederate line of defence had proceeded with hardly a check. The next enterprise, however, went less smoothly. Some sixty miles below Cairo the rushing tawny current of the mighty Mississippi turns suddenly northward, sweeping back, apparently, toward its source, in a great bend eight or ten miles long. At the point where the swift current sweeps around the bend was then a low-lying island, about a mile long and half a mile wide. This is known as Island No. 10; and at the opening of the war it was supposed to hold the key to the navigation of the Mississippi River. Here the Confederates had thrown up powerful earthworks, the heavy guns in which effectually commanded the river, both up and down stream. The works were protected against a land bombardment by the fact that the only tenable bit of land, New Madrid, was held by Confederate troops. The Missouri shore is low and swampy. In 1811 an earthquake-shock rent the land asunder. Great tracts were sunk beneath the water-level of the river. Trees were thrown down,

and lie rotting in the black and miasmatic water. Other portions of the land were thrown up, rugged, and covered with rank vegetation, making hills that serve only as places of refuge for water-moccasons and other noxious reptiles. Around this dreary waste of mud and water, the river rushes in an abrupt bend, making a peninsula ten miles long and three wide. Below this peninsula is New Madrid, a little village in the least settled part of Missouri; here the Confederates had established an army-post, and thrown up strong intrenchments. It was not, however, upon the intrenchments that they relied, but rather upon the impassable morasses by which they were surrounded on every side. In New Madrid were posted five or six thousand men; a small fleet of Confederate gunboats lay in the stream off the village; and higher up the river was Island No. 10, with its frowning bastions and rows of heavy siege-guns, prepared to beat back all advances of the Union troops.

In planning for the attack of this stronghold, the first difficulty found by Commodore Foote lay in the fact that his gunboats were above the batteries. In fighting down stream in that manner, the ships must be kept at long range: for, should a shot from the enemy injure the engine or boiler of a gunboat, the vessel is doomed; the rapid current will rush her down under the enemy's guns, and her capture is certain. But the peril of running the batteries so as to carry on the fight from below seemed too great to be ventured upon; and besides, even with Island No. 10 passed, there would still be the batteries of New Madrid to cope with, and the gunboats of the Confederates to take the ships in the rear. So it was determined that the navy should begin a bombardment of the Confederate works, while the army under General Pope should attend to New Madrid. Accordingly, on

March 15, the whiz of a rifled shell from the flagship "Benton" announced to the Confederates that the North wanted the Mississippi opened for travel.

In this engagement use was made for the first time of a new style of vessel known as mortar-boats, which in later conflicts on the rivers did great service. These boats were simple floats, heavily built, and calculated to stand the most terrible shocks. On the float was raised a sort of sheet-iron fort or wall, about five feet high; and in the centre stood one thirteen-inch mortar. The mortar is the earliest of all forms of cannon, and was in use in Europe in 1435. Its name is derived from its resemblance to an ordinary druggist's mortar. The great thirteen-inch mortars used in the Civil War weighed seventeen thousand pounds, and threw a shell thirteen inches in diameter. These shells were so heavy that it took two men to bring them up to the cannon's mouth. In the river-service, the mortar-boats were moored to the bank, and a derrick was set up in such a position that the shells could be hoisted up, and let fall into the yawning iron pot below. Foote had fourteen of these monsters pounding away at the Confederates, and the roar was deafening.

A correspondent of the *Chicago Times*, who was with the fleet at the time of the bombardment, thus describes the manner of using these immense cannon: "The operation of firing the mortars, which was conducted when we were near by, is rather stunning. The charge is from fifteen to twenty-two pounds. The shell weighs two hundred and thirty pounds. For a familiar illustration, it is about the size of a large soup-plate. So your readers may imagine, when they sit down to dinner, the emotions they would experience if they happened to see a ball of iron of those dimensions coming toward them at the rate of a thousand miles a minute. The boat is moored alongside the shore, so

as to withstand the shock firmly, and the men go ashore when the mortar is fired. A pull of the string does the work, and the whole vicinity is shaken with the concussion. The report is deafening, and the most enthusiastic person gets enough of it with two or three discharges. There is no sound from the shell at this point of observation, and no indication to mark the course it is taking; but in a few seconds the attentive observer with a good glass will see the cloud of smoke that follows its explosion, and then the report comes back with a dull boom. If it has done execution, the enemy may be seen carrying off their killed and wounded."

And so from mortar-boats and gunboats, the iron hail was poured upon the little island, but without effect. When Foote with his flotilla first opened fire, he thought that the Confederate works would be swept away in a day or two. His ordnance was the heaviest ever seen on the Mississippi, and in number his guns were enough to have battered down a mountain. But his days grew to weeks, and still the flag of the Confederacy floated above Island No. 10. General Beauregard telegraphed to Richmond, that the Yankees had "thrown three thousand shells, and burned fifty tons of gunpowder," without injuring his batteries in the least.

Some strange freaks are recorded of the shells. One fell on a cannon, around which eight or ten men were lying. The gun-carriage was blown to pieces, but not a man was hurt. Another fell full on the head of a man who was walking about distributing rations, and not so much as a button from his uniform was ever found.

Meantime, the army had marched around Island No. 10, fallen upon New Madrid, and captured it. Then the situation seemed like a deadlock. The character

of the country prevented any military attack on the island. Foote's bombardment was doing no serious damage, and that officer thought the batteries too strong for a dash past them by the fleet to be risked. Then the device was suggested of cutting a canal across the peninsula so that the transports and lighter vessels might be taken below the island without braving its fire. With incredible labor the project was accomplished. A channel forty feet wide must be made. First gangs of men with axes and saws, working in three feet of water, went ahead, cutting down the rank vegetation. As fast as a little space was cleared, a small steamer went in, and with dredge and steam-capstan hauled out the obstructions. In some places the surveyed channel was so filled with driftwood, fallen trees, and tangled roots, that the labor of a thousand men for a day seemed to make no impression. When the canal was pretty well blocked out, the levee was cut; and the rush of the waters from the great river undermined trees, and piled up new obstacles for the steamers to tow away. Amid the foulest vapors the men worked, and more than a thousand were sent to the hospital with chills and fever, and rheumatism. The most venomous snakes lurked in the dark recesses of the swamp; on cypress-stumps or floating logs the deadly water-moccason lay stretched out, ready to bite without warning. Wherever there was a bit of dry ground, the workers were sure to hear the rattle of the rattlesnake. Sometimes whole nests of these reptiles would be uncovered.

The work was continued day and night. When the failing daylight ceased to make its way through the thickly intertwined branches of trees and climbing vines, great torches would be lighted, and by their fitful glare the soldiers and sailors worked on in the water and mud. The light glared from the furnaces of the steam-

ers, lighting up the half-naked forms of the stokers. Now and then some dry vine or tree would catch a spark from a torch, and in an instant would be transformed into a pillar of fire. After eight days of work the canal was finished.

The work done, and such vessels as the canal would accommodate dispatched through it, Foote began preparations to run the batteries. First, he tried to cripple them as much as possible. A party of one hundred men was landed from boats under cover of darkness and began the work of spiking the guns. Quickly discovered, they were speedily driven off after doing slight damage. The next day the "Carondelet" was made ready to dash past the batteries at night to determine if the trip was practicable.

All day the sailors on the "Carondelet" had been working busily, getting their vessel in trim for the trip. Heavy planks were laid along the deck, to ward off plunging shot. Chain cables were coiled about all weak points, cord-wood was piled around the boilers, and the pilot-house was wrapped round and about with heavy hawsers. On the side toward the battery was tied a large barge, piled high with cotton-bales. When the time for starting drew nigh, all lights were extinguished. The guns were run in, and the ports closed. The sailors, heavily armed, were sent to their stations. Muskets, revolvers, and sabres were in the racks. Down in the boiler-room the stokers were throwing coal upon the roaring fires; and in the engine-room the engineer stood with his hand on the throttle, waiting for the signal to get under way.

Towards eleven o'clock the time seemed propitious for starting. The storm was at its height, and the roll of the thunder would drown the beat of the steamer's paddles. The word was given; and the "Carondelet," with her two protecting barges, passed out of

sight of the flotilla, and down towards the cannon of the enemy. For the first half-mile all went well. The vessel sped along silently and unseen. The men on the gun-deck, unable to see about, sat breathlessly, expecting that at any moment a cannon-ball might come crashing through the side into their midst. Suddenly from the towering smoke-stacks, burst out sheets of flame five feet high, caused by the burning soot inside, and lighting up the river all about. Quickly extinguished, they quickly broke out again; and now from the camp of the alarmed enemy came the roll of the drum, and the ringing notes of the bugle sounding the alarm. A gunboat was bearing down on the works, and the Confederates sprang to their guns with a will. The men on the "Carondelet" knew what to expect, and soon it came. Five signal rockets rushed up into the sky, and in an instant thereafter came the roar of a great gun from one of the batteries. Then all joined in, and the din became terrible. With volley after volley the Confederates hurled cannon-balls, shells, musket, and even pistol-bullets at the flying ship, that could only be seen an instant at a time by the fitful flashes of the lightning. On the "Carondelet" all was still as death. The men knew the deadly peril they were in, and realized how impossible it was for them to make any fight. In the black night, threading the crooked and ever-changing channel of the Mississippi River, it was impossible to go more than half-speed. In the bow men were stationed casting the lead, and calling out the soundings to the brave old Captain Hoel, who stood on the upper deck unprotected from the storm of bullets, and repeated the soundings to Captain Walker. So through the darkness, through the storm of shot and shell, the "Carondelet" kept on her way. Past the land-batteries, past the rows of cannon on the island, and past the formidable floating battery, she

swept uninjured. Heavy and continuous as was the fire of the Confederates, it was mainly without aim. The hay-barge was hit three times, but not a scar was on the gunboat when she stopped before the waterfront of New Madrid after twenty minutes' run through that dreadful fire.

To eager listeners far up the river the measured boom of six great guns from the triumphant ship bore the news of success. It was the death-knell of the power of Island No. 10.

The next night another gunboat came down, and the two set to work carrying the troops across the river, protecting artillerymen engaged in erecting batteries, and generally completing the investment of the island. In two days every loophole of escape for the Confederates is closed,—gunboats above and below them, batteries peering down from every bluff, and regiments of infantry, all prepared to move upon the works. They made one or two ineffectual but plucky attempts to ward off capture. One private soldier swam ashore, skulked past the Union pickets, and made his way to one of the Union mortar-boats. He succeeded in getting to the mortar, and successfully spiked it, thus terminating its usefulness. A second Confederate succeeded in reaching the deck of the mortar-boat, but while making his way across the deck tripped and fell. The rat-tail file he was carrying was driven into his side, making a wound from which he died in two hours. A third man, reckless of life, set out in a canoe to blow up a gunboat. He carried with him a fifty-pound keg of gunpowder, which he proposed to strap on the rudder-post of the vessel. He succeeded in getting under the stern of the vessel; but the gleam of his lighted match alarmed the sentry, who fired, hitting him in the shoulder. The Confederate went overboard, and managed to get ashore;

while his keg of powder, with the fuse lighted, went drifting down stream. Soon it exploded, throwing up an immense column of water, and showing that it would have sent the stoutest vessel to the bottom had it been properly placed.

But such struggles as these could not long avert the impending disaster. The Confederates were hemmed in on every side. It was true that they had a strong position, and could make a desperate resistance; but they were separated from their friends, and their final downfall was but a question of time. Appreciating this fact, they surrendered two days after the "Carondelet" had passed the batteries; and Foote made his second step (this time one of sixty miles) toward the conquest of the Mississippi.

To-day nothing remains of the once extensive island, save a small sandbank in the middle of the great river. The rushing current of the Father of Waters has done its work, and Island No. 10 is now a mere tradition.

CHAPTER XXI

The Expedition to Port Royal—The First Great Ironclad—How the "Merrimac" Changed Naval Architecture—Destruction of the "Congress" and the "Cumberland"—Timely Arrival of the "Monitor"—End of the "Merrimac."

BEFORE taking up in detail the story of the work of the navy on the Gulf Coast and the great rivers of the Mississippi River—the one place where the Confederates had at all an adequate force to cope with their assailants—the narrative of the events of the first two years of the war on the Atlantic seaboard may properly be concluded.

Shortly after the capture of the Hatteras Forts, the navy department saw the need of a harbor and base of naval operations farther south. Charleston, with its powerful defences, was deemed impregnable at that time; and elaborate descriptions of the Southern coast were prepared, setting forth the advantages and disadvantages of available Southern ports. Port Royal is the general name given to a broad body of water formed by the confluence of the Broad and Beaufort Rivers, and opening into the Atlantic Ocean on the South Carolina coast, about midway between Charleston and Savannah. No more beautiful region is to be found in the world. Far enough south to escape the rigors of the Northern winters, and far enough north to be free from the enervating heat of the tropics; honeycombed by broad, salt-water lagoons, giving moisture and mildness to the air,—the country about Port Royal is like a great garden; and even to-day, ravaged though it was by the storms of war, it shows many traces of its former beauty. It is in this region that

are found the famous Sea Islands, on which grows cotton so much more fleecy and fine of fibre than the product of the interior, that it is known the world over as Sea Island cotton, and sells at the highest price in the markets of England. In '61 the islands bore the great hospitable manor-houses of the Southern planters; broad of rooms and wide of piazzas, and always open for the entertainment of travellers, were they friends or strangers. The planters living there were among the wealthiest in the South, at a time when all planters were wealthy. They numbered their slaves by thousands. Standing on the broad piazza of one of these Southern homes, one could see the rows of rough huts that made up the negro quarters, and hear faintly the sound of the banjo and rude negro melodies, mingling with the music of piano or harp within the parlor of the mansion-house. Refined by education and travel, the planters of the region about Port Royal made up a courtly society, until war burst upon them, and reduced their estates to wildernesses, and themselves to beggary.

It was late in October, 1861, when the final determination to attack the forts at Port Royal was reached, and a fleet of fifty war-vessels and transports was gathered at Hampton Roads under command of Admiral Du Pont in the flagship "Wabash." The utmost secrecy was maintained as to its destination, and when the fleet passed out between the Chesapeake capes October 29th, only the admiral knew whither it was bound. The Confederates were better informed, and were strengthening their defensive works at Hilton Head in preparation for the attack.

For the first day all went well. The promise of fair weather given by the beautiful day of starting seemed about to be fulfilled. But on the second night, as they came near the terrible region of Cape Hatteras,

the wind began to freshen, and continued increasing in fierceness until it fairly blew a gale. The night was pitchy dark, and the crews on the vessels could hardly see the craft by which they were surrounded. Great as was the danger of being cast on the treacherous shoals of Hatteras, the peril of instant destruction by collision was even more imminent. Fifty vessels, heavily freighted with human lives, were pitching and tossing within a few rods of each other, and within a few miles of a lee shore. It seemed that the destruction of a large number of the vessels was unavoidable; and the sailors may be pardoned, if, remembering the mishaps of the Burnside expedition, they conceived Hatteras to be tenanted by an evil spirit, determined to prevent the invasion of Confederate territory. To add to the danger, the Confederates had extinguished the warning light at the Cape, and the navigators of the fleet had nothing to guide them in their course. When morning came, the fleet was pretty well scattered, although still many vessels were near enough together to be in no small danger. The transport "Winfield Scott," which carried four hundred and fifty soldiers, besides a large crew, was observed to be rolling heavily, and flying signals of distress. From the decks of the "Bienville," the nearest steamer, the officers with their glasses could see the crew of the distressed vessel working like beavers, throwing overboard everything of weight to lighten the ship. Notwithstanding all their efforts, she was clearly water-logged, and sunk so low in the water that wave after wave broke over her decks, every now and then sweeping a man away to sure death in the raging sea. It seemed folly to attempt to launch lifeboats in such a furious sea, but the captain of the "Bienville" determined to make the attempt to save the men on the doomed "Winfield Scott." The crew was piped to quarters, and the



FARRAGUT IN ACTION

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captain asked for volunteers to go to the rescue. Man after man stepped forward, until enough had been secured to man three boats with ten men each. Carefully the boats were dropped into the sea, and man after man swung into them; then they put off and started for the sinking ship. But while these preparations were being made, the two ships had been drifting closer and closer together. Soon it was seen that a collision was inevitable. Fortunately the boats were broadside on, so that the cutting effect of a blow from the bow was avoided. They were presently so near each other that the men began jumping from the deck of the "Winfield Scott" upon that of the "Bienville." The leap, though a perilous one, was made in safety by over thirty men. Suddenly a great wave lifted the ships up and dashed them together. Three poor wretches, just about to jump, were caught between the vessels and crushed to death. A few sharp cries of agony, and all was over; and the vessels, drifting apart, let their bodies, crushed beyond recognition, fall into the water. By this time the small boats, with their determined crews on board, had succeeded in getting around to the lee side of the sinking ship, and the work of getting the soldiers and sailors over the side was begun. By the most strenuous efforts all were saved, and the "Bienville" steamed away, leaving the "Winfield Scott" to her fate.

It was on Monday morning, November 4, that the flagship "Wabash" cast anchor off Port Royal. In the offing were a few more sail headed for the same point, and during the day some twenty-five vessels of the scattered squadron came up. For the next day ships were constantly arriving, and by Tuesday night the whole squadron lay safely anchored in the broad harbor.

The defences which the Confederates had erected

upon Hilton Head, a lofty bluff overlooking the harbor, were powerfully designed earthworks, poorly armed and manned. The forts were two in number, placed on a commanding elevation, and might have been made impregnable had the Confederates taken advantage of the warning sent them by their spies in Washington. Fort Walker had fourteen guns which could bear on an attacking fleet, and Fort Beauregard had twenty. When the fight began, the gunners found that most of their ammunition was either too large or too small for the guns.

Thursday morning dawned bright and mild as a morning in June. The shores of the beautiful bay were covered with woods, out of which rung the clear notes of Southern song-birds. The scene from the ships was one of the most charming imaginable. The placid bay, the luxuriant shores, the ocean showing across the low-lying ridge of white sand, the forts frowning from the steep headland, the fleet of majestic frigates mustered for the attack, and in the distance the flotilla of defenceless transports, safely out of range, their decks and rigging crowded with fifteen thousand men—all this presented a panorama of life and beauty which few eyes have ever beheld.

Du Pont, in the majestic "Wabash," moved down the bay, and, as he came in range of Fort Walker, sent a shell shrieking from a bow-gun, as signal that the action was begun. The old frigate moved on slowly, making play with the bow-guns until abreast of the fort, when with a crash she let fly her whole broadside. On she went for a few yards, then turning in a grand circle came back, giving the other broadside to the forts as she passed. The other ships fell in behind; and round and round before the forts the fiery circle revolved, spitting out fire and ponderous iron bolts, and making the peaceful shores of

the bay tremble with the deep reverberations of the cannon.

The Confederates, for their part, went into the action with the utmost coolness. They had been assured that their position was impregnable, and had been cautioned to be deliberate and determined in their defence. For a time their artillery service was admirable. But soon they found certain discouraging features about the affair. Their guns were too light to have any effect on the fleet, and their powder was of such bad quality that many of their shots fell short. Two great guns dismounted themselves, seriously injuring the men who were handling them, and the very first broadside from the fleet dismounted several more. Then it was found that the shells for the great Parrott guns were too large, and that the shells from other cannon failed to explode, owing to defective fuses. Soon the fleet found a point of fire from which it could enfilade the forts, and thereafter a perfect hail of shell and grape-shot fell in the trenches. One shell disabled eleven men. A solid shot struck a gun thought to be perfectly protected, and hurled it, with the men serving it, over the parapet. Every twenty minutes a gun was dismounted in Fort Walker, and at the end of the conflict Fort Beauregard had but nine serviceable guns.

For about four hours there was no cessation of fire on the part of the fleet. Round and round the circle the vessels steamed, giving one fort a broadside on the way up, and the other a broadside on the way down. The bombs rose from them in a majestic sweep through the air, and plunged into the fort, exploding with a roar equal to that of a cannon. One ship was commanded by Captain Drayton, who rained shot and shell mercilessly against the forts, although one of them was in command of his own brother.

At half-past one Fort Walker was found untenable, and the work of abandoning it was begun. The evacuation was completed in great haste, many valuables were left behind, and not even the guns were spiked. Still the entire garrison escaped to mainland, although the Federals had three thousand troops who might have made them all prisoners. Not long thereafter, Fort Beauregard also yielded to fate, and the day was won by the Federals.

Hilton Head was then converted into a great base for the storage of naval supplies, and held by the Union forces until the end of the war.

* * * * *

It will be remembered that when the navy-yard at Norfolk was burned and abandoned they set the torch to the frigate "Merrimac," a ship of thirty-five hundred tons, mounting forty guns. The flames did their work well. The vessel was burned to the edge of her copper sheathing and the hull then sank in the harbor. Months afterward Lieutenant George M. Brooke of the Confederate navy conceived the idea of raising the wreck and converting it into an iron-clad—the first practical one of which history bears record. His plans were immediately accepted and the work pushed to completion.

When the hulk had been raised and placed in the dry-dock, the first thing done was to cut it down to the level of the berth-deck; that is, to the level of the deck below the gun-deck in the old rig. Then both ends of the ship were decked over for a distance of seventy feet; while the midship section was covered by a sort of roof, or pent-house, one hundred and seventy feet long, and extending about seven feet above the gun-deck. This roof was of pitch pine and oak, twenty-four inches thick, and covered with iron plates two inches thick. The upper part of the roof, being flat,

was railed in, making a kind of promenade deck. In the great chamber formed by this roof were mounted ten guns, two of which, the bow and stern guns, were seven-inch rifles, and fairly powerful guns for those days. A strange feature of this ship, and one that was not discovered until she was launched, was that the weight of the iron-plating and the heavy guns she carried sunk her so deep in the water that the low deck forward and aft of the gun-room was always under water; so much so that the commander of another ship in the Confederate navy writes that he was obliged always to give the "Merrimac" a wide berth, lest he should run his ship on some part of the ram which lay unseen beneath the surface of the water. She had no longer the appearance of a ship, but seemed like a house afloat; the tradition says that the old salt on the "Cumberland," who first sighted her, reported gravely to the officer of the deck, "Quaker meetin'-house floating down the bay, sir."

This curious vessel, destined to play her part in the most epoch-making naval duel of history was put under command of Captain Franklin Buchanan, a former United States navy officer to whom the Naval Academy at Annapolis owes its site and its early growth. Her crew were mainly landsmen, ill-disciplined and unused to war afloat, but still accustomed to handling great guns ashore. With faulty engines, a rudder and screw exposed to the enemy's fire, the novel craft set forth on what was intended to be a trial trip, but which ended in one of the bloodiest naval battles of the Civil War. Let one of her surviving foes, an officer on the "Congress," tell the story:

One bell had struck some time, when the attention of the quartermaster on watch was drawn to an unusual appearance against the fringe of woods away over in the Norfolk Channel. After gazing intently some time, he approached the officer of the deck, and

presenting him the glass said, "I believe *that thing* is a-comin' down at last, sir."

Sure enough! There was a huge black roof, with a smokestack emerging from it, creeping down towards Sewall's Point. Three or four satellites, in the shape of small steamers and tugs, surrounded and preceded her. Owing to the intervening land, they could not be seen from Hampton Roads until some time after we had made them out; but, when they did show themselves clear of the point, there was a great stir among the shipping. But they turned up into the James River channel instead of down towards the fort, approaching our anchorage with ominous silence and deliberation.

The officers were by this time all gathered on the poop, looking at the strange craft, and hazarding all sorts of conjectures about her; and when it was plain that she was coming to attack us, or to force the passage, we beat to quarters, the "Cumberland's" drum answering ours.

By a little after four bells, or two o'clock, the strange monster was close enough for us to make out her plating and ports; and we tried her with a solid shot from one of our stern-guns, the projectile glancing off her forward casemate like a drop of water from a duck's back. This opened our eyes. Instantly she threw aside the screen from one of her forward ports, and answered us with grape, killing and wounding quite a number. She then passed us, receiving our broadside and giving one in return, at a distance of less than two hundred yards. Our shot had apparently no effect upon her, but the result of her broadside on our ship was simply terrible. One of her shells dismounted an eight-inch gun, and either killed or wounded every one of the gun's crew, while the slaughter at the other guns was fearful. There were comparatively few wounded, the fragments of the huge shells she threw killing outright as a general thing. Our clean and handsome gun-deck was in an instant changed into a slaughter-pen, with lopped-off legs and arms, and bleeding, blackened bodies, scattered about by the shells; while blood and brains actually dripped from the beams. One poor fellow had his chest transfixed by a splinter of oak as thick as the wrist; but the shell-wounds were even worse. The quartermaster, who had first discovered the approach of the iron-clad,—an old man-of-war's man, named John Leroy,—was taken below with both legs off. The gallant fellow died in a few minutes, but cheered and exhorted the men to stand by the ship, almost with his last breath. The "Merrimac" had, in the mean time, passed up stream; and our poor fellows, thinking she had had enough of it, and was for getting away, actually began to cheer. For many of them it was the last cheer they were ever to give. We soon saw what her object was; for standing up abreast of the bow of the "Cumberland," and putting her helm aport, she

ran her ram right into that vessel. The gallant frigate kept up her splendid and deliberate, but ineffectual fire, until she filled and sank, which she did in a very few minutes. Seeing the fate of the "Cumberland," which sank in very deep water, we set our top-sails and jib, and slipped the chains, under a sharp fire from the gunboats, which killed and wounded many. With the help of the sails, and the tug "Zouave," the ship was now run on the flats which make off from Newport News Point. Here the vessel keeled over as the tide continued to fall, leaving us only two guns which could be fought,—those in the stern ports. Two large steam-frigates and a sailing-frigate, towed by tugs, had started up from Hampton Roads to our assistance. They all got aground before they had achieved half the distance; and it was fortunate that they did so, for they would probably have met the fate of the "Cumberland," in which case the lives of the twelve or thirteen hundred men comprising their crews would have been uselessly jeopardized.

After the "Merrimac" had sunk the "Cumberland," she came down the channel and attacked us again. Taking up a position about one hundred and fifty yards astern of us, she deliberately raked us with eighty-pounder shell; while the steamers we had so long kept up the river, and those which had come out with the iron-clad from Norfolk, all concentrated the fire of their small rifled guns upon us. At this time we lost two officers, both elderly men. One was an acting master, who was killed on the quarter-deck by a small rifle-bolt which struck him between the shoulders, and went right through him. The other was our old coast pilot, who was mortally wounded by a fragment of shell. We kept up as strong a fire as we could from our two stern-guns; but the men were repeatedly swept away from them, and at last both pieces were disabled, one having the muzzle knocked off, and the other being dismounted. Rifles and carbines were also used by some of our people to try to pick off the "Merrimac's" crew when her ports were opened to fire, but of course the effect of the small-arms was not apparent to us.

It is useless to attempt to describe the condition of our decks by this time. No one who has not seen it can appreciate the effect of such a fire in a confined space. Men were being killed and maimed every minute, those faring best whose duty kept them on the spar deck. Just before our stern-guns were disabled, there were repeated calls for powder from them, and, none appearing, I took a look on the berth-deck to learn the cause. After my eyes had become accustomed to the darkness, and the sharp smoke from burning oak, I saw that the line of cooks and wardroom servants stationed to pass full boxes had been raked by a shell, and the whole of them either killed or wounded,—a sufficient reason why there was a delay with the powder. (I may mention here that the officer who commanded our powder division was a brother of the

captain of the "Merrimac.") The shells searched the vessel everywhere. A man previously wounded was killed in the cock-pit where he had been taken for surgical aid. The deck of the cock-pit had to be kept sluiced with water from the pumps, to extinguish the fire from the shells, although dreadfully wounded men were lying on this deck, and the water was icy cold; but the shell-room hatch opened out of the cock-pit, and fire must be kept out of there at all hazards, or the whole of us would go into the air together. In the wardroom and steerage, the bulkheads were all knocked down by the shells, and by the axe-men making way for the hose, forming a scene of perfect ruin and desolation. Clothing, books, glass, china, photographs, chairs, bedding, and tables, were all mixed in one confusing heap. Some time before this, our commanding officer, a fine young man, had been instantly killed by a fragment of shell which struck him in the chest. His watch, and one of his shoulder-straps (the other being gone), were afterwards sent safely to his father, a veteran naval officer.

We had now borne this fire for nearly an hour, and there was no prospect of assistance from any quarter, while we were being slaughtered without being able to return a shot. Seeing this, the officer who had succeeded to the command of the ship, upon consultation with our former captain (who was on board as a guest), ordered our flag to be struck. It is not a pleasant thing to have to strike your flag; but I did not see then, and do not see now, what else we were to do.

Left alone by the foe which had turned its attention to the "Cumberland," the people of the "Congress" busied themselves in getting their wounded ashore. The dead were left to their noble funeral pyre, for the ship was by this time fast breaking into flame at every point. All night the wreck blazed, but at two o'clock the culmination of the spectacle occurred. "The masts and rigging were still standing, apparently intact," wrote a survivor, "when a monstrous sheet of flame rose from the vessel to an immense height. The ship was rent in twain by the tremendous flash. Blazing fragments seemed to fill the air; and, after a long interval, a deep, deafening report announced the explosion of the ship's powder-magazine. When the blinding glare had subsided, I supposed that every vestige of the vessel would have disappeared; but ap-

parently all the force of the explosion had been upward. The rigging had vanished entirely, but the hull seemed hardly shattered; the only apparent change in it was that in two or three places several of the port-holes had been blown into one great gap."

The "Merrimac" now slowly approached the "Cumberland"—her lack of speed due to faulty engines, was her weakest point. The men of the doomed United States frigate had seen the outcome of the first broadsides fired by the "Congress" and viewed the oncoming monster with natural apprehension, but with undaunted courage. For them was no chance of escape, for a dead calm lay upon the waters. At half-past two their heaviest guns opened on the enemy and officers, and men watched breathlessly the course of their shot, and cried aloud with rage, or groaned with despair, as they saw them fall harmlessly from the iron ship. Still they had no thought of surrender. The fire of the "Cumberland" was received silently by the "Merrimac," and she came straight on, her sharp prow cutting viciously through the water, and pointed straight for her victim. A second broadside, at point-blank range, had no effect on her. One solid shot was seen to strike her armored sides, and, glancing upward, fly high into the air, as a baseball glances from the bat of the batsman; then, falling, it struck the roof of the pilot-house, and fell harmlessly into the sea. In another instant the iron ram crashed into the side of the "Cumberland," cutting through oaken timbers, decks, and cabins. At the same time all the guns that could be brought to bear on the Northern frigate were discharged; and shells crashed through her timbers, and exploded upon her decks, piling splinters, guns, gun-carriages, and men in one confused wreck. Had not the engines of the ram been reversed just before striking the frigate, her headway would

have carried her clear to the opposite side of the doomed ship, and the "Cumberland," in sinking, would have carried her destroyer to the bottom with her. As it was, the "Merrimac," with a powerful wrench, drew out of the wreck she had made, loosening her iron prow, and springing a serious leak in the operation. She drew off a short distance, paused to examine the work she had done, and then, as if satisfied, started to complete the destruction of the "Congress."

And well might the men of the "Merrimac" be satisfied with their hour's work. The "Cumberland" was a hopeless wreck, rapidly sinking. Her decks were blood-stained, and covered with dead men, and scattered arms and legs, torn off by the exploding shells. And yet her brave crew stuck to their guns, and fought with cool valor, and without a vestige of confusion. They had had but a few moments to prepare for action; and the long rows of clothes, drying in the rigging, told how peaceful had been their occupation before the "Merrimac" appeared upon the scene. Yet now that the storm of battle had burst, and its issue was clearly against them, these men stood to their guns, although they could feel the deck sinking beneath them. Every man was at his post; and even when the waters were pouring in on the gun-deck, the guns were loaded and fired. Indeed, the last shot was fired from a gun half buried in the waves. Then the grand old frigate settled to the bottom, carrying half her crew with her, but still flying the Stars and Stripes at the fore.

The "Congress" and the "Cumberland" thus disposed of, the iron-clad turned at first toward the "Minnesota." But that frigate was aground in water too shallow for the ram to approach, and the Confederates accordingly made their way back to Norfolk content

with the day's doings. No fatal hurt had been sustained by any one on the "Merrimac," nor was the structure of the clumsy vessel injured in any degree. The ram had been wrenched loose in withdrawing from the "Cumberland," and every bit of construction outside the armored structure was swept away. But the vitals of the ship were as stout as ever, and by day-break the next morning she was again ready for the fray.

It can easily be understood that the news of the engagement caused the most intense excitement throughout this country, and indeed throughout the whole world. In the South, all was rejoicing over this signal success of the Confederate ship. Bells were rung, and jubilees held, in all the Southern cities. An officer of the "Merrimac," who was dispatched post-haste to Richmond with reports of the engagement, was met at every station by excited crowds, who demanded that he tell the story of the fight over and over again. At last the starving people of the Confederacy saw the way clear for the sweeping away of the remorseless blockade.

In the North, the excitement was that of fear. The people of seaboard cities imagined every moment the irresistible iron ship steaming into their harbors, and mowing down their buildings with her terrible shells. The Secretary of War said, at a hastily called cabinet meeting in Washington: "The 'Merrimac' will change the whole character of the war: she will destroy every naval vessel; she will lay all the seaboard cities under contribution. Not unlikely we may have a shell or cannon-ball from one of her guns, in the White House, before we leave this room."

That neither the joyous anticipations of the South nor the gloomy forebodings of the North were fulfilled was due to a succession of circumstances, so

strangely apt, so phenomenally timely as to almost suggest a special intervention of Providence. For almost a year a Swedish inventor, John Ericsson, had been trying to interest the Navy Department in a novel type of war-vessel, but had been turned away with ridicule and contempt. The utmost concession he could obtain was an agreement that, if he would build his vessel at his own expense, the Government would man and test it. If it failed to stand the trial, he should be paid nothing. On these hard terms, Ericsson, with the financial aid of C. S. Bushnell of New Haven, Conn., built the first "Monitor." It was this curious vessel, unpaid for, as thoroughly private property as any steam yacht in New York harbor, that put an end to the "Merrimac's" depredations and revolutionized naval architecture.

The monitor type of warship has long been familiar to residents of Atlantic seaports, though it has now been abandoned for the towering battleship. Yet a brief description of the first of the type will not be amiss. She was a strange-looking craft. All that was to be seen of her above water was a low deck about a foot above the water, bearing in the centre a large round iron turret pierced with two great port-holes. Besides the turret, the smooth surface of the deck was broken by two other elevations,—a small iron pilot-house forward, made of iron plates about ten inches thick, and with iron gratings in front; aft of the turret was a low smoke-stack. Beneath the water-line this vessel had some strange features. The upper part of her hull, forming the deck, projected beyond her hull proper about four feet on every side. This projection was known as the "overhang," and was designed as a protection against rams. It was made of white oak and iron, and was impenetrable by any cannon of that day; although now, when steel rifled cannon are built

that will send a ball through twenty inches of wrought iron, the original "Monitor" would be a very weak vessel.

The turret in this little vessel, which held the two guns that she mounted, was so arranged as to revolve on a central pivot, thus enabling the gunners to keep their guns continually pointed at the enemy, whatever might be the position of the vessel.

How strange, how miraculous the coincidence that on the very night of the "Merrimac's" first victories this new and untried monster of war should have steamed into Hampton Roads! She had not been summoned—no news of the disaster had reached her officers. Their first knowledge of the heavy blow to the Union cause came from the sight of the blazing "Congress" and the sunken "Cumberland." But that spectacle gave them a foretaste of the morrow, and they, like the men on the "Merrimac," spent the night making ready for battle.

It was Sunday morning, and the sun rose in a cloudless blue sky. A light breeze stirred the surface of the water, and played lazily with the long streaming pennants of the men-of-war. The batteries on both sides of the bay were crowded with men waiting for the great naval battle of the day. Up at Norfolk a gay holiday party was embarking on steam-tugs, to accompany the Confederate ship and witness the total destruction of the Union fleet. No thought of defeat ever entered the minds of the proud believers in the new iron-clad of the Confederacy.

At the first sign of life on board the "Merrimac," the "Monitor" began her preparations for the battle. In fifteen minutes she was in battle trim. The iron hatches were closed, the dead-light covers put on, and obstructions removed from the main deck, so as to present a smooth surface only twenty-four inches above

the water, unbroken, save by the turret and pilot-house. In the pilot-house was Lieutenant Worden, who was to command the "Monitor" in this her first battle.

Leisurely the "Merrimac" came down the bay, followed by her attendant tugs; and, as she came within range, she opened fire on the "Minnesota," which was still aground. The frigate responded with a mighty broadside, which, however, rattled off the mailed sides of the ram like so many peas. Clearly, everything depended upon the "Monitor"; and that little craft steamed boldly out from behind the "Minnesota," and sent two huge iron balls, weighing one hundred and seventy pounds each, against the side of the "Merrimac." The shot produced no effect beyond showing the men of the "Merrimac" that they had met a foe-man worthy of their steel. The "Merrimac" slowed up her engines, as though to survey the strange antagonist thus braving her power. The "Monitor" soon came up, and a cautious fight began; each vessel sailing round the other, advancing, backing, making quick dashes here and there, like two pugilists sparring for an opening. The two shots of the "Monitor" would come banging one after the other against the "Merrimac's" armor, like the "one, two" of a skilled boxer. In this dancing battle the "Monitor" had an enormous advantage, on account of her smaller size, greater speed, and the way in which she answered her helm. The "Merrimac" was like a huge hawk being chased and baited by a little sparrow. Her heavy broadsides found nothing to hit in the almost submerged hull of the "Monitor." When a ball struck the turret, it glanced off, unless striking fair in the centre, when it fell in fragments, doing no greater damage than to dent the iron plates, and sometimes knocking down the men at the guns inside. The first manœuvre tried by the "Merrimac" was to run down

her little antagonist; and she did strike her with a force that dented the iron overhang of the "Monitor," and dashed the men in the "Merrimac" to the deck, with blood streaming from their nostrils. For a moment it seemed as though the "Monitor" must go under; but gradually the terrible ram glanced off, and the little vessel, righting, sent again her terrible two shots at her enemy. In the action of the day before, shot and shell had beaten against the sides of the ram so rapidly that one could not count the concussions. Now it was a series of tremendous blows about a minute apart; and, if the men had not been working away at their guns, they could have heard the oak timbers splintering behind the iron-plating. At a critical moment in the fight the "Merrimac" ran aground; and the "Monitor" steamed around her several times, seeking for weak places in which to plant a shot. Once Worden dashed at his adversary's screw, hoping to disable it, but missed by perhaps two feet. Two shots from the "Monitor" struck the muzzles of two cannon protruding from the portholes of the "Merrimac," and broke them off, throwing huge splinters of iron among the gunners inside. And so the battle continued until about noon: gun answered gun with thunderous reports, that echoed back from the batteries on shore in rolling reverberations. The pleasure-seeking tugs from Norfolk had scuttled back again out of the way of the great cannonballs that were skipping along the water in every direction. Neither of the combatants had received any serious injury. On board the "Monitor" the only hurt was received by a gunner, who was leaning against the iron wall of the turret just as a shot struck outside; he was carried below, disabled. But at last one lucky shot fired from one of the disabled guns of the "Merrimac" ended this gigantic contest; sending each contestant to her moorings, without an actual victory

for either side. This shot struck full and fair against the gratings of the pilot-house, through which Lieutenant Worden was looking as he directed the course of his ship. The concussion knocked him senseless. Flakes of iron and powder were driven into his eyes and face, blinding him completely for the time. He fell back from the wheel, and the "Monitor" was left for a moment without her guiding spirit. All was confusion; but in a few moments Worden recovered, and gave the order to sheer off. The "Monitor" then drew away, while Worden was moved to the cabin, and the second officer sent to his station in the turret. Lying on a sofa in the cabin, his eyes bandaged, and the horror of life-long blindness upon him, Worden asked faintly, "Have I saved the 'Minnesota'?"—"Yes," answered the surgeon. "Then," said he, "I die happy."

While these scenes were transpiring on the "Monitor," the "Merrimac" lay quietly awaiting her return. The Confederate officers say that she waited an hour, and then, concluding that the "Monitor" had abandoned the fight, withdrew to Norfolk. The Northern officers and historians say that the "Merrimac" was in full retreat when the decisive shot was fired. It is hard to decide, from such conflicting statements, to which side the victory belonged. Certain it is, that not a man on the "Merrimac" was injured, and that all damages she sustained in the fight were remedied before sunrise the next day. Later, as we shall see, she challenged the Union fleet to a new battle, without response. But with all these facts in view, it must be borne in mind that the purpose of the "Merrimac," that bright March Sunday, was to destroy the frigate "Minnesota": in that purpose she was foiled by the "Monitor," and to that extent at least the "Monitor" was the victor.

Lieutenant Worden, after the fight, went directly to Washington. President Lincoln was at a cabinet meeting when he heard of Worden's arrival in the city, and hastily rising said, "Gentlemen, I must go to *that fellow*." Worden was lying on a sofa, his head swathed in bandages, when the President entered. "Mr. President," said he, "you do me great honor by this visit."—"Sir," replied Mr. Lincoln, while the tears ran down his cheeks, "I am the one who is honored in this interview."

It has long been a matter of controversy which vessel was the victor in this duel. Neither was seriously injured—the "Merrimac" even less so than in the battle of the day before. Captain Worden's injury was the most serious sustained on either ship. But the "Merrimac" had come out to destroy the "Minnesota" and returned without accomplishing it. To that extent the day had gone against her. Yet the subsequent attitude of the Confederate officers was not that of the vanquished. Repeatedly they challenged the "Monitor" to new battle, but to no avail. On the 11th of April she steamed into the Roads, and exchanged a few shots with the Union batteries at the rip-raps; but the "Monitor," and other Union vessels, remained below Fortress Monroe, in Chesapeake Bay, out of the reach of the Confederate vessel. Again, a few days later, the "Merrimac" went to Hampton Roads, and tried to lure the "Monitor" to battle; but the challenge passed unanswered. It is probable that the Federal naval authorities did not care to imperil the only vessel that stood between them and destruction, out of mere bravado. Had the "Monitor" come out, an attempt would have been made to carry her by boarding. The crew of the "Merrimac" were prepared for the attack; and four gunboats accompanying her were crowded with men, divided into

squads, each with its specified duty. Some were to try and wedge the turret, some were to cover the pilot-house and all the openings with tarpaulin, others were to try to throw shells and gunpowder down the smoke-stack. But all these preparations proved useless, as the "Monitor" still remained quietly at her anchorage. On May 8 a third trip was made by the "Merrimac." When she came down the bay, she found the Union fleet, including the "Monitor," hard at work shelling the Confederate batteries at Sewall's Point. As she came towards them, they ceased their cannonade, and retired again to the shelter of Fortress Monroe. The "Merrimac" steamed up and down the Roads for some hours; and finally Commodore Tatnall, in deep disgust, gave the order, "Mr. Jones, fire a gun to windward, and take the ship back to her buoy."

Back to Norfolk she went, never again to leave that harbor. On the 9th of May the officers of the "Merrimac" noticed that the Confederate flag was no longer floating over the shore-batteries. A reconnoissance proved that the land forces had abandoned Norfolk, and it was necessary to get the ship away before the Union troops arrived and hemmed her in. Her pilots declared that if the ship was lightened they could take her up the James River; and accordingly all hands threw overboard ballast and trappings, until she was lightened three feet. Then the pilots claimed that with the prevalent wind they could not handle her. It was now useless to try to run her through the Union fleet, for the lightening process had exposed three feet of her unarmed hull to the fire of the enemy. It was accordingly determined that she should be destroyed. She was run ashore on Craney Island, and trains of powder laid all over her, and fired. Every gun was loaded, and the doors of the magazine were left open. Her crew then started on the march for the interior.

It was just in the gray of the morning that a rumbling of the earth was felt, followed by a shock that made all stagger. A column of smoke and flame shot into the air; huge cannon were hurled high above the tree-tops, discharging in mid-air. One shot fell in the woods some distance ahead of the marching crew, and all knew that it marked the end of the mighty "Merrimac."

CHAPTER XXII

Moving up the Mississippi—The Ram "Manassas"—Farragut's Expedition—Porter's Mortar-Boats—Passing the Forts—Capture of New Orleans.

WHILE Foote and his gunboats were doggedly opening the Father of Waters from the north, the greatest of all our American admirals was sturdily pushing northward from the great river's mouth. From the earliest days of the war the "Passes," as the several outlets of the river are called had been rigidly blockaded. The task was an easy one, for at that time, prior to the construction of the jetties, the channel was so narrow and tortuous that the chance of an outgoing vessel grounding was great enough even when she had not to elude the vigilance and the cannon-balls of an enemy. The people of New Orleans made many efforts to break this blockade, for, shut off from all foreign trade, the roar of commerce in their streets was stilled and grass grew on the once crowded levee. One plan narrowly failed of success.

It was at four o'clock one October morning that the watch on the sloop-of-war "Richmond" suddenly saw a huge dark mass so close to the ship that it seemed fairly to have sprung from the water, and sweeping down rapidly. The alarm was quickly given, and the crew beat to quarters. Over the water from the other ships, now fully alarmed, came the roll of the drums beating the men to their guns. The dark object came on swiftly, and the word was passed from man to man, "It's a Confederate ram." And indeed it was the ram "Manassas," which the Confederates had been hard at work building in the New Orleans ship-yards,

and on which they relied to drive the blockading squadron from the river. As she came rushing towards the "Richmond," two great lights higher up the river told of fire-rafts bearing down upon the fleet, and by the fitful glare three smaller gunboats were seen coming to the assistance of the "Manassas." Clearly the Confederates were attacking in force.

The first volley from the fleet rattled harmlessly from the iron-clad sides of the "Manassas"; and, not heeding it, she swept on and plunged into the side of the "Richmond." The great iron prow cut deep into the wooden sides of the Union vessel. Heavy oaken timbers were splintered like laths, and the men were violently hurled to the deck. As the ram drew away, the blue-jackets sprang to their guns and gave her a volley. Some of the shots must have penetrated her armor, for she became unmanageable. But the darkness prevented the officers of the "Richmond" from seeing how much damage they had done, and they did not follow up their advantage. The strange panic that the sight of a ram so often brought upon sailors of the old school fell on the officers of this squadron, and they began hastily getting their ships out of the river. By this time four more Confederate steamers had come to the aid of the ram, and were cannonading the Northern fleet at long range. In their hurried attempt to escape, the "Richmond" and the "Vincennes" had run aground. The captain of the latter vessel, fearing capture, determined to fire his vessel and escape with his crew to the "Richmond." Accordingly he laid a slow-match to the magazine, lighted it, and then, wrapping his ship's colors about his waist in the most theatrical manner, abandoned his ship. But the plan was not altogether a success. As he left the ship, he was followed by a grizzled old sailor, who had seen too much fighting to believe in blowing up

his own ship; and, when he saw the smoking slow-match, he hastily broke off the lighted end, and without saying a word threw it into the water. No one observed the action, and the crew of the "Vincennes" watched mournfully for their good ship to go up in a cloud of smoke and flame. After they had watched nearly an hour, they concluded something was wrong, and returned to their old quarters. By this time the enemy had given up the conflict, and the United States navy was one ship ahead for the old sailor's act of insubordination. The Confederate flotilla returned to New Orleans, and reported that they had driven the blockaders away. There was great rejoicing in the city: windows were illuminated, and receptions were tendered to the officers of the Confederate fleet. But, while the rejoicing was still going on, the Union ships came quietly back to their old position, and the great river was as securely closed as ever.

The National Government, however, was not going to content itself with begging the trade of New Orleans, and on the 2d of February, 1862—the very day Grant struck at Fort Henry—Admiral David G. Farragut sailed in the "Hartford" from Hampton Roads to take charge of an expedition against the Crescent City. The place of rendezvous was Ship Island, a barren sandbar off the coast of Mississippi. The task before the admiral was no easy one. His greatest obstacle was the river itself—its current was swift, its channel tortuous, its mouth so obstructed by sandbars that all the ships had to be lightened to cross them, and one frigate, the "Colorado," could not pass at all. The entrance to the river proper, above the "Passes," was blocked by two great forts, St. Philip and Jackson, the latter named after the hero of the Battle of New Orleans. It was a huge star of stone and mortar. In its massive walls were great cavernous bomb-proofs

in which the soldiers were secure from bursting shells. It stood back about a hundred yards from the levee, and its casemates just rose above the dike that keeps the Mississippi in its proper channel. When the river was high from the spring floods of the north, a steamer floating on its swift tide towered high above the bastions of the fort. In the casemates and on the parapets were mounted seventy-five guns of all calibres. By its peculiar shape and situation on a jutting point of land, the fort was able to bring its guns to bear upon the river in three directions.

When the storm of civil war burst upon the country, the Confederates of New Orleans were prompt to seize this and Fort St. Philip, that stood on the other side of the river. They found Fort Jackson in the state of general decay into which most army posts fall in times of peace, and they set at work at once to strengthen it. All over the parapet, bomb-proofs, and weak points bags of sand were piled five or six feet deep, making the strongest defence known in war. Steamers plied up and down the river, bringing provision, ammunition, and new cannon, and soon the fort was ready to stand the most determined siege. Fort St. Philip, across the river, though not so imposing a military work, was more powerful. It was built of masonry, and heavily sodded over all points exposed to fire. It was more irregular in shape than Fort Jackson, and with its guns seemed to command every point on the river. Both were amply protected from storming by wide, deep moats always filled with water.

With his fleet once over the bar Admiral Farragut found himself well established in the lower Mississippi, with a force of twenty-five men-of-war, and twenty mortar-schooners; one of the most powerful armadas ever dispatched against an enemy. He was one day

visited by some French and English naval officers, who had carefully examined the defences of the Confederates, and came to warn him that to attack the forts with wooden vessels, such as made up his fleet, was sheer madness, and would only result in defeat. "You may be right," answered the brave old sailor, "but I was sent here to make the attempt. I came here to reduce or pass the forts, and to take New Orleans, *and I shall try it on.*" The foreigners remarked that he was going to certain destruction, and politely withdrew.

In the meantime, the tars on the mortar-fleet were working industriously to get their ships in fighting-trim. The top-masts were stripped of their sails, and lowered; the loose and standing rigging strapped to the masts; the spars, forebooms, and gaffs unshipped, and secured to the outside of the vessels to avert the danger from splinters, which, in naval actions, is often greater than from the shots themselves. From the main-deck everything was removed that could obstruct the easy handling of the tremendous mortars; and the men were drilled to skill and alertness in firing the huge engines of death. The work was hastened on the mortar-schooners, because the plan was to rush them into position, and let them harass the Confederates with a steady bombardment, while the ships-of-war were preparing for their part in the coming fight.

The mortar-fleet was under command of Admiral Porter, an able and energetic officer. He soon had his ships ready, and began moving them into position along the banks of the river, out of sight of the forts. To further conceal them from the gunners in the forts, he had the masts and rigging wrapped with green foliage; so that, lying against the dense thickets of willows that skirt that part of the river, they were invisible. Other boats that were in more exposed positions had

their hulls covered with grass and reeds, until they seemed a part of the swamp that bordered the river. After the line of fire had been obtained by a careful mathematical survey, Porter got all his mortar-boats into position, and began his bombardment. The gunners on the mortar-boats could not see the forts; but the range had been calculated for them, and they merely fired mechanically. A lookout, perched on the mast-head, could see over the low willow-forest, and watch the course of the shells as they rushed high into the air, and then, falling with a graceful curve, plunged into the forts. The firing was begun on the 16th of April, and was kept up with a will. The twenty huge mortars keeping up a constant fire, made a deafening roar that shook the earth, and could be heard far up the river at New Orleans, where the people poured out into the streets, and gaily predicted defeat for any enemy who should attack "the boys in the forts." The forts were not slow in returning the fire; but as the mortar-vessels were hidden, and did not offer very large marks, their fire was rather ineffective. Parties of Confederates, old swamp-hunters, and skilled riflemen, stole down through the dense thickets, to pick off the crews of the mortar-schooners. They managed to kill a few gunners in this way, but were soon driven away by the point-blank fire of the supporting gunboats. But all this time the shells were falling thick and fast, driving the soldiers to the bomb-proofs, and tearing to pieces everything unprotected. One shell set fire to some wooden structures that stood on the parade-ground in Fort Jackson; and, as the smoke and flames rose in the air, the gunners down the river thought that the fort was burning, and cheered and fired with renewed vigor. The shells that burst upon the levee soon cut great trenches in it, so that the mighty Mississippi broke through with a rush, and flooded the

country all about. But the forts seemed as strong and unconquered as ever.

While the soldiers were crowded together in the bomb-proofs to escape the flying bits of shell, the sailors on the little fleet of Confederate vessels anchored above them were busily engaged in getting ready a fire-raft which was to float down the river, and make havoc among the vessels of the Union fleet. Two such rafts were prepared; one of which, an immense affair, carrying cords of blazing pine-wood, was sent down in the early morning at a time when the vessels were utterly unprepared to defend themselves. Luckily it grounded on a sandbar, and burned and crackled away harmlessly until it was consumed. This warned Commander Porter of the danger in which his mortar-vessels were of a second attack of the same nature; and accordingly he put in readiness one hundred and fifty small boats with picked crews, and well supplied with axes and grapnels, whose duty it was to grapple any future rafts, and tow them into a harmless position. They did not have long to wait. At sundown that night, Commander Porter reviewed his little squadron of row-boats as they lay drawn up in line along the low marshy shores of the mighty river. The sun sank a glowing red ball beneath the line at which the blue waters of the gulf and the blue arch of heaven seemed to meet. The long southern twilight gradually deepened into a black, moonless night. The cries of frogs and seabirds, and the little flashes of the fireflies, were silenced and blotted out by the incessant roar and flash of the tremendous mortars that kept up their deadly work. Suddenly in the distance the sky grows red and lurid. "The fort is burning!" cry the men at the guns; but from the masthead comes the response, "No, the fire is on the river. It is another fire-raft." The alarm was instantly given to all the vessels of

the fleet. Bright colored signal-lights blazed on the decks, and the dark, slender cordage stood out against the brilliant red and green fires that flickered strangely upon the dark wooded banks of the river. Rockets rushed high into the air, and, bursting, let fall a shower of party-colored lights that told the watchers far down the river that danger was to be expected. Then the signal-lights went out, and all was dark and silent save where the lurid glare of the great mass of fire could be seen floating in the great curves of the tortuous river toward the crowded ships. It was a time of intense suspense. The little flotilla of fire-boats, organized by Commander Porter that day, was on the alert; and the blue-jackets bent to their oars with a will, and soon had their boats ranged along a bend far above the fleet. Here they waited to catch the fiery monster, and save the ships. The danger came nearer fast. Rapidly the flames increased in volume, until the whole surrounding region was lighted up by the glare; while from the floating fire, a huge black column of smoke arose, and blended with the clouds that glowed as though they themselves were on fire. When the raft came into view around a point, it was seen to be too big for the boats to handle unaided, and two gunboats slipped their cables, and started for the thing of terror. From every side the row-boats dashed at the raft. Some grappled it, and the sailors tugged lustily at their oars, seeking to drag the mass of flames toward the shore. Then the "Westfield," under full head of steam, dashed furiously against the raft, crashing in the timbers and sending great clouds of sparks flying high in the air. From her hose-pipes she poured floods of water on the crackling, roaring, blazing mass; while all the time, with her powerful engines, she was pushing it toward the shore.

In the meantime, the sailors from the fleet of small

boats were swarming upon the raft wherever they could find a foothold free from flame. Some carrying buckets dashed water upon the flames, some with axes cut loose flying timbers, and let them float harmlessly down the river. It was a fight in which all the men were on one side; but it was a grand sight, and was eagerly watched by those on the imperilled vessels. The immediate arena of the conflict was bright as day, but all around was gloom. At last the pluck and determination of the men triumph over the flames. The raft, flaming, smouldering, broken, is towed out of the channel, and left to end its life in fitful flashes on a sandy point.

Hardly had the gray dawn begun to appear, when the roll of the drums on the decks of the ships was heard; and, soon after, the roar of the opening gun was heard from one of the mortar-schooners. Again the bombardment was opened. The twenty boats in the mortar-fleet were divided into three divisions, each of which fired for two hours in succession, and then stopped for a time to allow the great cannon to cool. Thus a continuous bombardment was kept up, and the soldiers in the forts were given no time to repair the damages caused by the bursting shells. Every mortar was fired once in five minutes; so that one shell was hurled towards the fort about every minute, while sometimes three shells would be seen sweeping with majestic curves through the air at the same time. The shells weighed two hundred and fifteen pounds; and when they were hurled into the air by the explosion of twenty pounds of powder, the boat bearing the mortar was driven down into the water six or eight inches, and the light railings and woodwork of buildings at the Balize, thirty miles away, were shattered by the concussion. The shells rose high in the air, with an unearthly shriek, and after a curve of a mile and a

half fell into or near the forts, and, bursting, threw their deadly fragments in all directions. Day after day, and night after night, this went on. If the men on the mortar-schooners showed bravery and endurance in keeping up so exhausting a fire so steadily, what shall we say for the men in the forts who bore up against it so nobly? Before noon of the first day of the bombardment, the soldiers of Fort Jackson saw their barracks burned, with their clothing, bedding, and several days' rations. Shells were pouring in upon them from vessels that they could not see. The smooth-bore guns mounted in the embrasures would hardly send a shot to the nearest of the hostile gunboats. Then the river broke through its banks, and half the fort was transformed into a morass. An officer in Fort Jackson said, after the surrender, that in two hours over one hundred shells had fallen upon the parade-ground of that work, tearing it up terribly. For six days this terrible fire was endured; and during the latter half of the bombardment the water stood knee-deep on the gun-platforms, and the gunners worked at their guns until their shoes, soaked for days and days, fairly fell from their feet. For bed and bedding they had the wet earth, for rations raw meat and mouldy bread. If there were glory and victory for the Union sailors, let there at least be honor and credit granted the soldiers of the gray for the dogged courage with which they bore the terrible bombardment from Porter's flotilla.

While the mortars were pounding away through those six long days and nights, Farragut was getting ready to take his ships past the forts. Union scouts and spies had travelled over every foot of land and water about the forts; and the exact strength of the Confederates, and the difficulties to be overcome, were clearly known to the Federal admiral. One of the

chief obstructions was a chain of rafts and old hulks that stretched across the channel by which the fleet would be obliged to ascend the river. Under cover of a tremendous fire from all the mortars, two gunboats were sent up to remove this obstruction. The night was dark and favorable to the enterprise, and the vessels reached the chain before they were discovered. Then, under a fierce cannonade from the forts, Lieutenant Caldwell put off in a row-boat from his vessel, boarded one of the hulks, and managed to break the chain. The string of hulks was quickly swept ashore by the swift current, and the channel was open for the ascent of the Union fleet.

On the 23d of April, Farragut determined that his fleet should make the attempt to get past the forts the following day. He knew that the enemy must be exhausted with the terrible strain of Porter's bombardment, and he felt that the opportunity had arrived for him to make a successful dash for the upper river. The fleet was all prepared for a desperate struggle. Many of the captains had daubed the sides of their vessels with the river mud, that they might be less prominent marks for the Confederate gunners. The chain cables of all the vessels were coiled about vulnerable parts, or draped over the sides amidships to protect the boilers. Knowing that it was to be a night action, the gun-decks had been whitewashed; so that even by the dim, uncertain light of the battle lanterns, the gunners could see plainly all objects about them. Hammocks and nettings were stretched above the decks to catch flying splinters from the spars overhead. Late at night the admiral in his long-boat was pulled from ship to ship to view the preparations made, and see that each captain fully understood his orders.

It was two o'clock on the morning of the 24th of April, when the Confederates on the parapets of their

forts might have heard the shrill notes of fifes, the steady tramp of men, the sharp clicking of capstans, and the grating of chain cables passing through the hawse-holes on the ships below. Indeed, it is probable that these sounds were heard at the forts, and were understood, for the Confederates were on the alert when the ships came steaming up the river.

They formed in a stately line of battle, headed by the "Cayuga." As they came up the stream, the gunners in the forts could see the mastheads over the low willow thickets that bordered the banks of the stream. The line of obstructions was reached and passed, and then the whole furious fire of both forts fell upon the advancing ships. Gallantly they kept on their way, firing thunderous broadsides from each side. And, while the ships were under the direct fire of the forts, the enemy's fleet came dashing down the river to dispute the way. This was more to the taste of Farragut and his boys in blue. They were tired of fighting stone walls. In the van of the Confederate squadron was the ram "Manassas," that had created such a panic among the blockading squadron a month before. She plunged desperately into the fight. The great frigate "Brooklyn" was a prominent vessel in the Union line, and at her the ram dashed. The bold hearts on the grand old frigate did not seek to avoid the conflict, and the two vessels rushed together. The ram struck the "Brooklyn" a glancing blow; and the shot from her one gun was returned by a hail of cannon-balls from the frigate's tremendous broadside, many of which broke through the iron plating. Nothing daunted, the ram backed off and rushed at the frigate again. This time she struck full on the frigate's side. The shock was terrible. Men on the gun-deck of the ram were hurled to the deck, with the blood streaming from their nostrils. The frigate

keeled over farther and farther, until all thought that she would be borne beneath the water by the pressure of the ram. All the time the spiteful bow-gun of the iron monster was hurling its bolts into her hull. But the blow of the ram had done no damage, for she had struck one of the coils of chain that had been hung down the "Brooklyn's" side. The two vessels slowly swung apart; and, after a final broadside from the "Brooklyn," the "Manassas" drifted away in the pitchy darkness to seek for new adversaries. She was not long in finding one; for as the gray dawn was breaking she suddenly found herself under the very bows of the "Mississippi," which was bearing down upon her and seemed sure to run her down. The captain of the "Manassas" was an able steersman, and neatly dodged the blow; but in this quick movement he ran his vessel ashore, and she lay there under the guns of the "Mississippi," and unable to bring any of her own guns to bear. The captain of the frigate was not slow in taking advantage of this chance to be revenged for all the trouble she had given the Union fleet; and he took up a good position, and pounded away with his heavy guns at the iron monster. The heavy shots crashed through the iron plating and came plunging in the portholes, seeking every nook and cranny about the vessel. It was too much for men to stand, and the crew of the "Manassas" fled to the woods; while their vessel was soon set on fire with red-hot shots, and blew up with a tremendous report soon after.

In the meantime, the ships of the Union fleet were doing daring work, and meeting a determined resistance. The flagship "Hartford" was met by a tug which pushed a huge burning fire-raft against her sides. There the flaming thing lay right up against the portholes, the flames catching the tarred rigging, and run-

ning up the masts. Farragut walked his quarter-deck as coolly as though the ship was on parade. "Don't flinch from that fire, boys," he sang out, as the flames rushed in the portholes, and drove the men from their guns. "There's a hotter fire than that for those who don't do their duty. Give that rascally little tug a shot, and don't let her go off with a whole coat." But the tug did get away, after all; and no one can feel sorry that men plucky enough to take an unarmed tug into a terrible fight of frigates and iron-clads should escape with their lives. The men on the "Hartford" fought the flames with hose and buckets, and at last got rid of their dangerous neighbor. Then they saw a steamer crowded with men rushing toward the flagship without firing a shot, and evidently intending to board. Captain Broome, with a crew of marines, was working a bow-gun on the "Hartford." Carefully he trained the huge piece upon the approaching steamer. He stepped back, stooped for a last glance along the sights, then with a quick pull of the lanyard the great gun went off with a roar, followed instantly by a louder explosion from the attacking steamer. When the smoke cleared away, all looked eagerly for the enemy; but she had vanished as if by magic. That single shot, striking her magazine, had blown her up with all on board.

Much of the hardest fighting was done by the smaller vessels on either side. The little Confederate "cotton-clad" "Governor Moore" made a desperate fight, dashing through the Union fleet, taking and giving broadsides in every direction. The Union vessel "Varuna" also did daring work, and naturally these two ships met in desperate conflict. After exchanging broadsides, the "Governor Moore" rammed her adversary, and, while bearing down on her, received a severe raking fire from the "Varuna." The "Gover-

nor Moore" was in such a position that none of her guns could be brought to bear; but her captain suddenly depressed the muzzle of his bow-gun, and sent a shot crashing through *his own* deck and side, and deep into the hull of the "Varuna." The vessels soon parted, but the "Varuna" had received her death-wound, and sank in shallow water. The "Governor Moore" kept on her way, but was knocked to pieces by the fire from the heavy guns of the frigates shortly after.

And so the battle raged for five hours. To recount in full the deeds of valor done, would be to tell the story of each ship engaged, and would require volumes. Witnesses who saw the fight from the start were deeply impressed by the majesty of the scene. It was like a grand panorama. "From almost perfect silence,—the steamers moving through the water like phantom ships,—one incessant roar of heavy cannon commenced, the Confederate forts and gunboats opening together on the head of our line as it came within range. The Union vessels returned the fire as they came up, and soon the hundred and seventy guns of our fleet joined in the thunder which seemed to shake the very earth. A lurid glare was thrown over the scene by the burning rafts; and, as the bombshells crossed each other and exploded in the air, it seemed as if a battle were taking place in the heavens as well as on the earth. It all ended as suddenly as it commenced."

While this gigantic contest was going on in the river abreast of the forts, the people of New Orleans were thronging the streets, listening to the unceasing roar of the great guns, and discussing, with pale faces and anxious hearts, the outcome of the fight. "Farragut can never pass our forts. His wooden ships will be blown to pieces by their fire, or dashed into atoms by the 'Manassas,'" people said. But many listened

in silence: they had husbands, sons, or brothers in that fearful fight, and who could tell that they would return alive? By and by the firing ceased. Only an occasional shot broke the stillness of the morning. Then came the suspense. Had the fleet been beaten back, or was it above the forts, and even now sullenly steaming up to the city? Everybody rushed for the housetops to look to the southward, over the low land through which the Mississippi winds. An hour's waiting, and they see curls of smoke rising above the trees, then slender dark lines moving along above the tree-tops. "Are they our ships?" every one cries; and no one answers until the dark lines are seen to be crossed by others at right angles. They are masts with yard-arms, masts of sea-going vessels, the masts of the invader's fleet. A cry of grief, of fear, of rage, goes up from the housetops. "To the levee!" cry the men, and soon the streets resound with the rush of many feet toward the river. "The river is crooked, and its current swift. It will be hours before the Yankees can arrive: let us burn, destroy, that they may find no booty." Let one who was in the sorrowful city that terrible April day tell the story:

I went to the river-side. There, until far into the night, I saw hundreds of drays carrying cotton out of the presses and yards to the wharves, where it was fired. The glare of those sinuous miles of flame set men and women weeping and wailing thirty miles away, on the farther shore of Lake Pontchartrain. But the next day was the day of terrors. During the night, fear, wrath, and sense of betrayal, had run through the people as the fire had run through the cotton. You have seen, perhaps, a family fleeing, with lamentations and wringing of hands, out of a burning house; multiply it by thousands upon thousands: that was New Orleans, though the houses were not burning. The firemen were out; but they cast fire on the waters, putting the torch to the empty ships and cutting them loose to float down the river.

Whoever could go was going. The great mass that had no place to go to, or means to go with, was beside itself. "Betrayed! betrayed!" it cried, and ran in throngs from street to street, seeking

some vent, some victim for its wrath. I saw a crowd catch a poor fellow at the corner of Magazine and Common Streets, whose crime was that he looked like a stranger and might be a spy. He was the palest living man I ever saw. They swung him to a neighboring lamp-post; but the Foreign Legion was patrolling the town in strong squads, and one of its lieutenants, all green and gold, leaped with drawn sword, cut the rope, and saved the man. This was one occurrence; there were many like it. I stood in the rear door of our store, Canal Street, soon after re-opening it. The junior of the firm was within. I called him to look toward the river. The masts of the cutter "Washington" were slowly tipping, declining, sinking—down she went. The gunboat moored next her began to smoke all over and then to blaze. My employers lifted up their heels and left the city, left their goods and their affairs in the hands of one mere lad—no stranger would have thought I had reached fourteen—and one big German porter. I closed the doors, sent the porter to his place in the Foreign Legion, and ran to the levee to see the sights.

What a gathering!—the riff-raff of the wharves, the town, the gutters. Such women! such wrecks of women! and all the juvenile rag-tag. The lower steamboat-landing, well covered with sugar, rice, and molasses, was being rifled. The men smashed; the women scooped up the smashings. The river was overflowing the top of the levee. A rain-storm began to threaten. "Are the Yankee ships in sight?" I asked of an idler. He pointed out the tops of their naked masts as they showed up across the huge bend of the river. They were engaging the batteries at Camp Chalmette, the old field of Jackson's renown. Presently that was over. Ah, me! I see them now as they come slowly round Slaughterhouse Point, into full view; silent, so grim and terrible, black with men, heavy with deadly portent, the long banished Stars and Stripes flying against the frowning sky. Oh for the "Mississippi," the "Mississippi!" Just then she came down upon them. But how? Drifting helplessly, a mass of flames.

The crowds on the levee howled and screamed with rage. The swarming decks answered never a word; but one old tar on the "Hartford," standing with lanyard in hand, beside a great pivot-gun, so plain to view that you could see him smile, silently patted its big black breech and blandly grinned.

As the masts of the fleet came up the river, a young man stepped out upon the roof of the City Hall, and swiftly hoisted the flag of the State of Louisiana. When the ships came up, two officers were sent ashore to demand the surrender of the city; and shoulder to

shoulder the two old sailors marched through a howling, cursing mob to the City Hall. The mayor refused to surrender the city, saying that Farragut already had captured it. The officers went back to their ships, and the flag still floated. Two days later the officers, with a hundred sailors and marines, returned and demanded that the flag be hauled down. No one in the city would tear it down, and the Federals went up to the roof to lower it themselves. The street and surrounding housetops were crowded with a hostile people, all armed. No one could tell that the fall of the flag would not be followed by a volley from the undisciplined populace. The marines in front of the building stood grouped about two loaded howitzers that bore upon the darkly muttering crowd. Violence was in the air. As the two officers rose to go to the roof, the mayor, a young Creole, left the room and descended the stairs. Quietly he stepped out into the street, and without a word stood before one of the howitzers, his arms folded, eying the gunner, who stood with lanyard in hand, ready to fire at the word of command. The flag fell slowly from the staff. Not a sound arose from the crowd. All were watching the mayor, who stood coldly looking on death. The Federal officers came down carrying the flag. A few sharp commands, and the marines tramped away down the street, with the howitzers clanking behind them. The crowd cheered for Mayor Monroe and dispersed, and New Orleans became again a city of the United States.

CHAPTER XXIII

Surrender of Forts St. Philip and Jackson—The Navy at Port Hudson—On the Yazoo River—The Ram "Arkansas"—The "Webfooted Gunboats"—In the Bayous—Rescued by the Army—Commodore Porter's Joke—Running the Batteries.

WHEN the Confederate flag had been hauled down at New Orleans under the guns of Farragut's fleet, Porter with his mortar-boats and a gunboat or two was still beleaguering the forts at the mouth of the Mississippi. The Union fleet had not silenced or captured these works, but had merely run past them. So Porter took up again the work of bombardment and pushed it with such vigor that on the 28th of April the Confederate commander announced his willingness to surrender. On the following day Porter proceeded upstream with his squadron, and anchored off the fort. A boat, manned by six trim sailors in dress uniforms, put off, and soon returned, bringing the commander of the defeated forces and two or three officers. They were received on the "Harriet Lane," and Commodore Porter had made great preparations for the meeting. The crews of all the vessels were dressed in snow-white mustering-suits, and the officers in brass-buttoned blue coats and white trousers. The decks were scrubbed, and all traces of the fight cleared away. As the Confederate officers came up to the fleet, one of them, a former lieutenant in the Union navy, said, "Look at the old navy. I feel proud when I see them. There are no half-breeds there: they are the simon-pure." As the Confederates came over the side, Porter stood, with his officers, ready to receive them. The greatest politeness was observed on either side; and Porter writes:

"Their bearing was that of men who had gained a victory, instead of undergoing defeat." While the papers of capitulation were being signed, a message came from the deck that the huge Confederate iron-clad "Louisiana" was drifting down upon them, a mass of flames, and there was great danger that she would blow up in the midst of the Union fleet. "This is sharp practice, gentlemen," said Porter, "and some of us will perhaps be blown up; but I know what to do. If you can stand what is coming, we can; but I will make it lively for those people if anybody in the flotilla is injured."

"I told Lieutenant Wainwright to hail the steamer next him," writes Captain Porter, "and tell her captain to pass the word for the others to veer out all their riding-chains to the bitter end, and stand by to sheer clear of the burning iron-clad as she drifted down. I then sat down to the table, and said, 'Gentlemen, we will proceed to sign the capitulation.' I handed the paper to General Duncan, and looked at the Confederate officers to see how they would behave under the circumstances of a great iron-clad dropping down on them, all in flames, with twenty thousand pounds of powder in her magazines. For myself, I hoped the fire would not reach the powder until the ship had drifted some distance below us. My greatest fear was that she would run foul of some of the steamers.

"While I was thinking this over, the officers were sitting as coolly as if at tea-table among their friends.

"Just then there was a stir on deck, a kind of swaying of the vessel to and fro, a rumbling in the air, then an explosion which seemed to shake the heavens. The 'Harriet Lane' was thrown two streaks over, and everything in the cabin was jostled from side to side;

but not a man left his seat, or showed any intention of doing so.

"I was glad that I had signed before the explosion took place, as I would not have liked to have my autograph look shaky."

With Union garrisons in charge of both forts the great river was open from New Orleans to the gulf, and Porter made haste to join Farragut in New Orleans. Arrived there he found the indomitable admiral had already gone up river to clear away the batteries between that point and Vicksburg. This was no light task, and indeed proved beyond the ability of the navy to perform without aid. The little field batteries along the shore were readily silenced or driven away, but speedily returned or sought another post. But the hard nut the navy had to crack was the Confederate position at Port Hudson, Mississippi. These batteries were perched on a high bluff that overlooks one of those abrupt curves around which the current of the Mississippi River sweeps with such terrific force. The heavy guns bore down upon a point at which the ships would almost inevitably be swept out of their course by the swift stream, and where the river was filled with treacherous shifting shoals. Naval officers all agreed that to pass those batteries was a more difficult task than had been the passage of the forts below New Orleans; yet Farragut, eager to get at the stronghold of the foe in Vicksburg, determined to make the attempt. The mortar-vessels were stationed below to drive the enemy from his guns with well-directed bombs; while the fleet, led by the stanch old "Hartford," should make a bold dash up the river.

Night fell upon the scene; and the ships weighed anchor, and started upon their perilous voyage. To the side of each man-of-war was bound a gunboat to tow the larger vessel out of danger in case of disaster.



ENGAGEMENT OF THE "KEARSARGE" AND "ALABAMA," JUNE 19, 1864



Silently the long string of vessels swept upward towards the batteries; but, as the "Hartford" came into range, the watchful Confederates gave the alarm, and the nearest battery at once opened fire. Then from Porter's mortar-schooners far down the river came an answering roar; and, as ship after ship came up into range, she opened with shot and shell upon the works. On the dark river-banks great alarm fires were kindled, lighting up the water with a lurid glare, and making the ships clearly visible to the Confederate gunners. But soon the smoke of battle settled down over all; and gunners, whether on shore or on the ships, fired at random. The "Hartford" led the way, and picked out the course; and the other vessels followed carefully in her wake. In the mizzen-top of the flagship was stationed a cool old river pilot, who had guided many a huge river steamer, freighted with precious lives, through the mazy channels of the Mississippi. There, high above the battle-smoke, heedless of the grape-shot and bits of flying shell whistling around him, he stood at his post, calmly giving his orders through a speaking-tube that led to the wheel-room. Now and then the admiral on the deck below would call up, asking about the pilot's safety, and was always answered with a cheery hail. But though the "Hartford" went by the batteries, heedless of the storm and lead poured upon her, she found herself alone, when, after firing a last gun, she swept into the clear air and tranquil water out of range of the enemy's guns. The night wore on, and all on board were consumed with anxiety for the fate of the vessels that had dropped behind. The lookout in the tops reported that he could see far down the river a bright red light that could only be caused by a burning vessel. It proved to be the steamer "Mississippi," that had grounded under the guns of the batteries, and had been fired and aban-

doned by her crew. But of this the admiral knew nothing; and when, after an hour or two, he heard the dull, heavy boom of an explosion, he went sadly to his cabin, fearing that the lives of many valiant sailors had been sacrificed. There was no way to communicate with the fleet below, and it was not until days afterward that the admiral learned how his fleet had been beaten back by the heavy guns of the Confederates and the swift current of the river. The "Richmond" grounded at a point within easy range of the batteries, and her crew fought desperately while shell after shell went crashing through her hull. They saw the other vessels of the fleet go drifting by helpless in the mighty current of the river, but they faltered not in their brave defence until they saw their ship a wreck and in flames. Then leaving their dead comrades with the "Richmond" for a funeral pyre, they escaped to the shore, and threaded their way through miles of morasses and dense thickets until they came to the mortar-boats, where they found refuge and rest. And so that first attack on Port Hudson ended with Farragut above the batteries, and his ships below. It had only served to prove, that, safe in their heavy earthworks, the Confederates could defy any attack by ships alone. This fact was clear to the Union authorities, and they began massing troops about the hostile works.

But the assaults of the troops proved equally ineffective. Harassed on the landward side, and subjected to constant bombardment from the river, the garrison of Port Hudson hung on gallantly. One of the Confederate soldiers said, some time after the war: "One can get used to almost anything. After the first two or three days, we took the bombardment as part of the regular routine. Pieces of shell were continually flying about, and it was the regular thing for

a bomb to drop down among us at intervals. I have seen them come down within fifty feet of a sentinel, and throw up a wagon-load of dirt, without his even turning his head. We had but few men hurt by the artillery-fire. I do not believe we averaged one man hit for every thousand pounds of metal thrown. I remember that one day I counted thirteen shells and bombs hurled at the spot where I was posted before we had a man hurt, and he was only slightly wounded." Naturally, such work as this could not drive the Confederates from their trenches; and the fleet soon concluded to leave the army to capture Port Hudson, while the ships steamed on up the river toward Vicksburg. The army kept up the siege for weeks, until the Confederates, hearing of the fall of Vicksburg, surrendered.

Meantime, far up the Yazoo River, in Mississippi, the Confederates were building a powerful iron-clad ram, which it was fondly hoped would drive Farragut and Porter from the river and save Vicksburg. For a time it seemed as though their hopes were destined to be realized, but the ill-luck that attended the most powerful Confederate ships—the "Merrimac," the "Manassas," the "Albemarle," for example—overtook her and cut her career short.

When at last the carpenters' clatter had ceased, and the ram, ready for action, lay in the little river, the crew were mustered on the deck, and told that the new boat had been built to clear the Union vessels from the Mississippi, and that purpose should be carried out. No white flag was to flutter from that flag-staff; and she should sink with all her crew before she would surrender. Any sailor who feared to enter upon such a service might leave the ship at once. No one left; and the "Arkansas" started down the river to look for an enemy. She was not long in finding one. At

the mouth of the Yazoo floated three Union gunboats,—the “Carondelet,” the “Tyler,” and the “Queen of the West.” As the ram came down into sight, her men heard the roll of the drums on the decks of the hostile vessels. The gunboats quickly opened fire, which was as promptly returned by the “Arkansas”; and, as she came swiftly rushing down the stream, the three vessels fled before her. The men on the ram were all new recruits, and made awkward work of the firing; but as she came to close quarters she sent her shells crashing into the Union ships, while the shot she received in return rattled harmlessly off her steel-mailed sides. The “Carondelet” was the first vessel to come to grief. She had hardly fired four shots when a heavy solid shot crashed through her side, and rattled against the most delicate part of the engine. She was helpless at once; and hardly had this damage been reported when a second shot came with a burst into an open port, killed five men, and broke its way out the other side. In ten minutes her decks were slippery with blood, and thick strewn with wounded and dead men. The current of the river drifted her upon a sandbar; and she lay there helplessly, now and again answering the galling fire of her foe with a feeble shot. Pouring in a last broadside, the “Arkansas” steamed past her, and, disregarding the other two vessels, headed for Vicksburg, where she knew her aid was sorely needed.

The news of her coming preceded her; and, when she came within sight of the steeples of the city, at least ten thousand people were watching her progress, and wondering whether she could pass by the Federal batteries and through the Federal fleet. The Federal fleet was all ready for her, and prepared such a gauntlet for the “Arkansas” as had never been run by any vessel. As she came within range, every Union gun

that could be brought to bear opened; and shot and shell rained from shore-batteries and marine guns upon the tough hide of the ram. As she sped by the vessels, they gave her their broadsides, and the effect was tremendous. As the huge iron balls struck the ship, she keeled far over; and to her crew inside, it seemed as though she was being lifted bodily out of the water. Not a shot broke through the armor; but the terrible concussions knocked men down, and made blood come pouring from their nostrils. For new men, her crew fought well and bravely; though two fell flat on their faces, afraid to lift their heads, lest they be taken off by a shell.

When it was seen that the "Arkansas" was likely to pass through the lines unscathed, the Federals tried to blockade her way; but she deviated not an inch from her path. The vessel that stood before her had to move aside, or take the chances of a blow from her terrible iron beak. She came straight to the centre of the fleet before opening fire; and when her port-holes were opened, and the big guns peered out, they found plenty of targets. Her first volley knocked a gunboat to pieces; and in another minute she had crashed into the side of a Union ram, sending that unlucky craft ashore for repairs. But the storm of solid shot was too much for her; and she was forced to seek shelter under the bluffs, where the heavy guns of the Confederate shore-batteries compelled the Union ships to keep a respectful distance. Here she lay for several weeks, beating off every assault of the Federals, and making a valuable addition to the defences of the city. But, in an evil hour, the Confederate authorities decided to send her down the river to recapture Baton Rouge. When her journey was but half completed she was pounced upon by several United States vessels, with the "Essex" in the lead. Her engines breaking

down, she drifted upon a sand-bank; and the attacking ships pounded her at their leisure, until, with the fire bursting from her portholes, she was abandoned by her crew, and blazed away until her career was ended by the explosion of her magazine. She had given the Federal fleet some hard tussles, but beyond that had done nothing of the work the Confederates so fondly hoped of her.

There now began for the fleet on the Mississippi, particularly the gunboats under Porter's command, a curious campaign in mud and water that led Lincoln to call them "webfooted gunboats," and earned them among the soldiers the title of mud-turtles. The country about Vicksburg is cut up by little rivers and bayous, not often wide enough for two boats to pass, but deep enough to offer practicable pathways to the interior. Into these water-lanes the gunboats plunged, now to reduce some Confederate fort or the interior, again to destroy a Confederate ship-yard. Porter himself led the largest of the expeditions in the hopes of finding a way around the batteries at Vicksburg, and narrowly escaped leaving the bones of his boats in the forests into which he had taken them.

An early expedition was one of three gunboats up the White River in search of a Confederate fort. Within twelve hours from the start, the sailors learned from a ragged negro, whom they captured on the shore, that the Confederates had powerful batteries only five miles farther up, and that the river channel was obstructed by sunken vessels. Anchor was cast for the night; and in the morning the troops accompanying the expedition were landed, and plunged into the forest with the plan of taking the fort by a rush from the rear. The gunboats began a slow advance up the river, throwing shells into the woods ahead of them. The blue-jackets kept carefully under cover; for, though

they could see no foe, yet the constant singing of rifle-bullets about the ships proved that somewhere in those bushes were concealed sharpshooters whose powder was good and whose aim was true. The "Mound City" was leading the gunboats, and had advanced within six hundred yards of the enemy's guns, when a single shot, fired from a masked battery high up the bluffs, rang out sharply amid the rattle of small arms. It was the first cannon-shot fired by the Confederates in that engagement, and it was probably the most horribly deadly shot fired in the war. It entered the port-casemate forward, killed three men standing at the gun, and plunged into the boiler. In an instant the scalding steam came hissing out, filling the ship from stem to stern, and horribly scalding every one upon the gun-deck. The deck was covered with writhing forms, and screams of agony rang out above the harsh noise of the escaping steam and the roar of battle outside. Many were blown overboard; more crawled out of the portholes, and dropped into the river to escape the scalding steam, and struggling in the water were killed by rifle-balls or the fragments of the shells that were bursting all around. The helpless gunboat turned round and round in the stream, and drifted away, carrying a crew of dead and dying men. So great was the horror of the scene, that one of the officers, himself unhurt, who saw his comrades thus tortured all about him, went insane.

While this scene was going on before the fort, the Union troops had come up behind it, and with a cheer rushed over the breastworks, and drove the garrison to surrender. The Confederate banner fell from the staff, and the Stars and Stripes went up in its place. But how great was the price that the Federals had to pay for that victory! That night, with muffled drums, and arms reversed, the blue-jackets carried to the grave fifty-nine of their comrades, who twelve hours before

were active men. With three volleys of musketry the simple rites over the sailors' graves were ended; and those who were left alive, only said with a sigh, "It is the fortune of war."

Meanwhile Porter was putting to the test his favorite theory that the bayous and creeks would furnish a safe, if not an easy, route around Vicksburg. His men first cut the levees, and let the mighty tide of the Mississippi sweep in, filling the bayous to the brim, and flooding all the country round about. Then the gunboats plunged in, and were borne along on the rushing tide until they brought up, all standing, against the trunks of trees, or had their smoke-stacks caught by overhanging branches.

Then came the tug of war; and the axemen were called to the front, and set to work. They chopped their way along for some distance; the rapid current from the river banging the vessels against the trees and stumps, until all the standing rigging and light cabins were swept away. After a good deal of work they saw before them a broad river, wide enough for two vessels to steam abreast. Soon they drifted out into it, and the commanding officer sang out cheerily, "On to Vicksburg, boys, and no more trees to saw." And so they steamed on, thinking how neatly they should take the "gray-coats" in the rear, when suddenly a bend in the river showed them, just ahead, a fort in the middle of the river, with the channel blocked on either side. That was a surprise. The works were new, and the water was still muddy about the sunken steamers. Clearly the wily Pemberton, in command at Vicksburg, had heard of this inland naval expedition, and was determined to check it effectually.

The gunboats backed water, and crowded in confused groups. The gunners in the fort took hurried aim, and pulled the lanyards of their cannon, forgetting

that those pieces were not loaded. It was hard to tell which party was the more excited at the unexpected meeting. This gave the blue-jackets a chance to collect their thoughts, and in a minute or two the gunboats opened fire; but they were soon convinced that the fort was too much for them, and they turned and crawled back through the woods to the fleet.

But, even while this expedition was working its way back to the station of the vessels on the Mississippi, Porter was starting another through a second chain of water-courses that he had discovered. This time he was so sure of getting into the rear of Vicksburg, that he took four of his big iron-clads, and two light mortar-boats built especially for work in the woods. General Sherman with a strong army-force, marched overland, keeping up with the gunboats. Admiral Porter, in his Memoirs, gives a graphic picture of this expedition. Back of Vicksburg the country is low, and intersected in every direction by narrow, tortuous bayous, lined on either side by gloomy morasses or majestic forests. Into these little-known water-courses Porter boldly led his ponderous iron-clads; while Sherman, with a detachment of troops, advanced along the shore, keeping as near the flotilla as possible. Seldom have naval vessels been detailed upon so strange a service. For days they steamed on under the spreading branches of trees, that often spanned the bayous in a mighty arch overhead, shutting out all sunlight. For a time this navigation of placid, shady waterways was pleasant enough; but, as they penetrated farther into the interior, the jackies sighed for the blue waters of the ocean, or even for the turbid current of the Mississippi. The heavy foliage that gave so grateful a shade also harbored all sorts of animals; and coons, rats, mice, and wildcats, that had been driven to the trees for shelter during the prevailing high water, peered down

upon the sailors, and often dropped sociably down upon the decks of the vessels gliding beneath.

At some portions of the voyage the flotilla seemed to be steaming through the primeval forest. The bayou was but a few feet wider than the gunboats, and its banks were lined by gnarled and knotted old veterans of the forest,—live oaks, sycamore, and tupelo gum trees that had stood in majestic dignity on the banks of the dark and sullen stream for centuries. Sometimes majestic vistas would open; broad avenues carpeted with velvet turf, and walled in by the massive tree trunks, extending from the banks of the stream far back into the country. Again, the stately forests would be replaced by fields of waving corn or rice, with the tops of a row of negro cabins or the columned front of a planter's house showing in the distance. Then, as the flotilla steamed on, this fair prospect would disappear, and be replaced by noisome cypress brakes, hung thick with the funereal Spanish moss, and harboring beneath the black water many a noxious reptile.

So through the ever-changing scenery the gunboats moved along, making but little progress, but meeting with no serious obstacle, until one morning there appeared on a bit of high ground, some yards in advance of the leading gunboat, an army officer mounted on an old white horse. It was General Sherman, and his troops were in camp near by. He greeted the naval forces cheerily, and, rallying Porter on the amphibious service into which his gunboats had been forced, warned him that he would soon have not a smoke-stack standing, nor a boat left at the davits.

"So much the better," said the undaunted admiral. "All I want is an engine, guns, and a hull to float them. As to boats, they are very much in the way."

Soon after leaving Sherman, Porter saw that the

difficulties he had thus far met and conquered were as nothing to those which he had yet to encounter. The comparatively broad stream up which he had been steaming came to an end, and his further progress must be through Cypress Bayou, a canal just forty-six feet wide. The broadest gunboat was forty-two feet wide, and to enter that narrow stream made retreat out of the question: there could be no turning round to fly. The levees rose on either side of the narrow canal high above the decks of the iron-clads, so that the cannon could not be sufficiently elevated to do effective work in case of an attack. But there were nine feet of water in the great ditch; and that was enough for Porter, who pressed boldly on.

The country into which the combined military and naval expedition was advancing was in truth the granary of Vicksburg. On all other sides of the beleaguered city, the Federal lines were drawn so closely that the wagons laden with farm produce could not hope to pass. But here, back of the city, and far from the camps of Grant's legions, the work of raising produce for the gallant people of Vicksburg was prosecuted with the most untiring vigor. The sight, then, of the advancing gunboats aroused the greatest consternation. From the deck of his vessel Porter could see the people striving to save their property from the advancing enemy. Great droves of cattle were being driven away far into the interior; negroes were skurrying in all directions, driving poultry and pigs to the safe concealment of the forest; wagons groaning under the weight of farm and garden produce could be seen disappearing in the distance. What the inhabitants could not save they destroyed, in order that it might not profit the invaders. A short distance from the mouth of the bayou were six thousand bales of cotton piled up on opposite sides of the stream, ready to be

taken aboard a steamer when the war should end. As the gunboats advanced slowly, making little headway against the two-knot current of the bayou, Porter saw two men carrying lighted pine-knots, dash up to the cotton, and begin to set it afire. The admiral looked on in disgust. "What fools these mortals be!" said he to an officer standing at his side; "but I suppose those men have a right to burn their own cotton, especially as we have no way of preventing them."

"I can send a howitzer shell at them, sir," said the officer, "and drive them away."

But to this Porter demurred, saying that he had no desire to kill the men, and that they might do as they liked with their own. Accordingly the officers quietly watched the vandals, until, after twenty minutes' work, the cotton was blazing, and a dense mass of smoke cut off all vision ahead, and rose high in the air. Then Porter began to suspect that he had made a mistake. The difficulties of navigation in the bayou were great enough, without having smoke and fire added to them. Yet to wait for the cotton to burn up might cause a serious delay. On the high bank of the bayou stood a negro begging the sailors to take him aboard.

"Hallo, there, Sambo!" sung out Porter, "how long will it take this cotton to burn up?"

"Two day, massa," responded the contraband; "p'raps tree."

That ended the debate. "Ring the bell to go ahead fast," said the admiral to the pilot; and away went the flotilla at full speed, plunging into the smoke and fire. It was a hot experience for the sailors. The heavy iron-clads made but slow progress, and were scorched and blistered with the heat. The ports were all shut down, and the crews called to fire-quarters, buckets in hand. To remain on deck was impossible. Porter and his captain made the trial, but had hardly

entered the smoke when the scorching heat drove both into the shelter of an iron-covered deck-house. The pilot standing at the wheel seized a flag, and, wrapping it about his face and body, was able to stay at his post. As the flames grew hotter, the sailors below opened the main hatch, and, thrusting up a hose, deluged the deck with floods of water. So, without a man in sight, the huge iron ship moved along between the walls of flame. Suddenly came an enormous crash. The gunboat shivered, and for a moment stood still; then, gathering headway, moved on again, though with much ominous grating beneath her keel. Soon after she passed out of the smoke and heat, and all hands rushed on deck for a whiff of the fresh, cool air. Their first thought was of the cause of the collision; and, looking eagerly astern, they saw a heavy bridge, about fifty feet of which had been demolished by the tremendous power of the ram. This gave Porter a hint as to the force he had at his command; and thereafter bridges were rammed as a matter of course whenever they impeded the progress of the iron-clads. The astonishment of the people along the shore may well be imagined.

The great and formidable obstacles that stood in the path of the squadron were, as a rule, overcome by the exertion of the great powers of the steam-driven, iron-plated vessels; but at last there came a check, that, though it seemed at first insignificant, terminated the sylvan manœuvres of the iron-clad navy. After running the gauntlet of the burning cotton, butting down trees, and smashing through bridges, the column entered a stretch of smooth water that seemed to promise fair and unobstructed sailing. But toward the end of this expanse of water a kind of green scum was evident, extending right across the bayou, from bank to bank. Porter's keen eye caught sight of this; and,

turning to one of the negroes who had taken refuge on the gunboat, he asked what it was. "It's nuffin' but willows, sah," he replied. "When de water's out of de bayou, den we cuts de willows to make baskets with. You kin go troo dat like a eel."

Satisfied with this explanation, the admiral ordered the tug which led the column to go ahead. Under a full head of steam, the tug dashed into the willows, but began to slow up, until, after going about thirty yards, she stopped, unable to go forward or back. Undaunted by this unexpected resistance, Porter cried out that the "Cincinnati" would push the tug along; and the heavy gunboat, withdrawing a short distance to gain headway, hurled herself forward, and dashed into the willows with a force that would have carried her through any bridge ever built. But the old fable of the lion bound down by the silken net was here re-enacted. The gunboat did not even reach the tug. The slender willow-shoots trailed along the sides, caught in the rough ends of the iron overhang, and held the vessel immovable. Abandoning the attempt to advance, the gunboat strove to back out, but to no avail. Then hooks were rigged over the side to break away the withes, and men slung in ropes alongside vigorously wielded sharp cutlasses and saws; but still the willows retained their grip. Matters were now getting serious; and, to add to Porter's perplexity, reports came in that Confederate troops were coming down upon him. Then he began to lose confidence in his iron-clads, and wish right heartily for Sherman and his soldiers, of whose whereabouts he could gain no knowledge. The enemy did not leave him long in doubts as to their intention, and soon began a vigorous fire of shells from the woods. Porter stopped that promptly by manning his mortars and firing a few shells at a range measured by the sound of the enemy's

cannon. The immediate silence of the hostile batteries proved the accuracy of the admiral's calculations, and gave him time to devise means for escaping from his perilous position.

How to do it without aid from Sherman's troops was a difficult question; and in his perplexity he exclaimed aloud: "Why don't Sherman come on? I'd give ten dollars to get a telegram to him." The admiral was standing at the moment on the bank of the bayou, near a group of negroes; and an athletic-looking contraband stepped forward, and, announcing himself as a "telegram-wire," offered to carry the note "to kingdom kum for half a dollar." After sharply cross-questioning the volunteer, Porter wrote on a scrap of paper: "DEAR SHERMAN,—Hurry up, for Heaven's sake. I never knew how helpless an iron-clad could be, steaming around through the woods without an army to back her."

"Where will you carry this?" asked Porter, handing the dispatch to the negro.

"In my calabash kiver, massa," responded the messenger with a grin; and, stowing the paper away in his woolly hair, he darted away.

The telegram being thus dispatched, Porter again turned his attention to the willows; and, a fortunate rise in the water having occurred, he was able to extricate his vessels and begin his retreat down the bayou.

The difficulties of the retreat were no less great than those of the advance, with the intermittent attacks of the enemy added. The work of removing heavy, soggy logs, half submerged beneath the black waters of the bayou, clearing away standing trees, and breaking up and removing Red-river rafts, wearied the sailors, and left them little spirit to meet the enemy's attacks. The faint sounds of wood-chopping in the distance told too well of the additional impediments

yet in store for the adventurous mariners. Scouts sent out reported that the enemy had impressed great gangs of negroes, and were forcing them to do the work of felling the trees that were to hem in Uncle Sam's gunboats, for the benefit of the C. S. A. But the plans of the Confederates to this end were easily defeated. Porter had not only many willing arms at his command, but the powerful aid of steam. When the gunboats came to a tree lying across the bayou, a landing party went ashore and fastened large pulleys to a tree on the bank. Then a rope was passed through the block; and one end having been made fast to the fallen tree, the other was taken aboard a gunboat. The word was then given, "Back the iron-clad hard"; and the fallen monarch of the forest was soon dragged across the bayou and out of the way. So expert did the jackies become in this work, that they were soon able to clear away the trees faster than the enemy could fell them. The tug then went ahead, and for a time put an end to further tree-chopping, and captured several of the negro axemen.

But while this slow and painful retreat was in progress the Confederates were mustering by thousands. A few field batteries were brought into play, and the sharpshooters were becoming perniciously active. The narrowness of the bayous made the danger of capture by a rush of boarders from the shore ever present, and it was one of Porter's gravest fears. He began to think wistfully of Sherman, until one day when the bullets were flying with murderous effect upon those in the boats, a line of blue-clad soldiers burst from the woods and put the Confederates to flight. Sherman had come.

From behind his shield, Porter looked out anxiously at the forces by which he was beleaguered. He could see clearly that the Confederates were increasing in

numbers; and, when at last he saw a long gray column come sweeping out of the woods, his heart failed him, and for a moment he thought that the fate of his flotilla was sealed. But at that very moment deliverance was at hand. The Confederates were seen to fall into confusion, waver, and give way before a thin blue line,—the advance guard of Sherman's troops. The negro "telegram-wire" had proved faithful, and Sherman had come on to the rescue.

That ended the difficulties of the flotilla. The enemy, once brought face to face with Sherman's men, departed abruptly; and soon the doughty general, mounted on an old gray horse, came riding down to the edge of the bayou, for a word with Porter. Seeing the admiral on the deck of his gunboat, he shouted out, "Hallo! Porter, what did you get into such an ugly scrape for? So much for you navy fellows getting out of your element. Better send for the soldiers always. My boys will put you through. Here's your little nigger. He came through all right, and I started at once. Your gunboats are enough to scare the crows: they look as if you had got a terrible hammering."

In a few days Porter and his webfooted gunboats were again with Grant and the army—still above Vicksburg. By this time the General—always for the direct way of gaining an end, even though it involved risk and certain bloodshed—was tired of planning to evade the batteries and announced his determination to run boldly by them. But before undertaking this enterprise seriously Porter thought he would test the perils of the trip.

He took a large flatboat, and built it up with logs and lumber until it looked like a powerful ram. Two huge wheel-houses towered amidships, on each of which was painted, in great, staring letters, "Deluded Rebels, cave in." From the open ports, the muzzles of what

appeared to be heavy rifles protruded; though the guns that seemed so formidable were really only logs of wood. Two high smoke-stacks, built of empty pork-barrels, rose from the centre of this strange craft; and at the bottom of each stack was an iron pot, in which was a heap of tar and oakum that sent forth volumes of black smoke when lighted. One dark night the fires in this sham monster were lighted, and she was towed down to the Confederate batteries, and set drifting down the river. She was quickly discovered, and the batteries on the bluffs opened on her with a roar. There was nothing about the dummy to be hurt, however; and it was impossible to sink her. So she sailed majestically through the plunging hail of solid shot, and past the terrible batteries that were thought to be a match for anything afloat. The Confederates in the trenches looked at each other in astonishment and dismay. Word was sent to General Pemberton that a powerful Yankee iron-clad had passed the batteries unhurt, and was speeding down the stream. The General's first thought was of a gunboat, the "Indianola," lately captured from the Federals, and now being converted into an iron-clad ram. She must be saved from recapture, even if it should be necessary to destroy her. Word was hurriedly sent down the river that a formidable ram was bearing down upon the "Indianola"; and, if the latter vessel was not in condition to do battle, she should be blown up. Accordingly, while the dummy ram, caught in an eddy of the river, was whirling helplessly around just below Vicksburg, the Confederates put the torch to their new war-vessel, and she was soon a heap of ashes. Porter's little joke was a good one for the United States.

Work was then begun to get the transports and gunboats ready to run the gauntlet.

But, though Grant could have starved the city into

subjection by simply sitting and waiting, he grew tired of this, and determined to force matters to an issue. The first thing to be done was to get the gunboats and transports past the batteries. The transports were put into shape to stand a cannonade by having their weaker parts covered with cotton-bales; and on one dark night in June, the flotilla started down the river, with the iron-clad gunboats in advance. Admiral Porter led in the "Benton." At eleven o'clock the fleet got under way; and, as the "Benton" came abreast of the first batteries, the alarm was given in the Confederate camp, and a fierce cannonade began. Huge fires were lighted on the shores to light up the river, and make the gunboats visible to the Confederate cannoneers. The warships swung grandly around the bend, responding with rapid broadsides to the fire of the forts. All the vessels were hit once or oftener. The heavy smoke that accompanies such fierce cannonading hung over the river, cutting off all view of the surroundings from the sailors. The eddying currents of the river caught the steamers, swinging them now this way, now that, until the perplexed pilots knew not which way their vessels were headed. The blue-jackets at the guns worked away cheerily, knowing that enemies were on every side of them, and that, no matter which way their missiles sped, an enemy was to be found. More than one vessel turned completely around; and once, when the rising breeze cleared away the smoke, the pilot of the "Benton" found that he was taking his ship up-stream again, and was in imminent danger of running down a friendly gunboat. But they all passed on without receiving any severe injuries, and at five o'clock in the morning lay anchored far below the city.

The heavy batteries at Grand Gulf, called "the key to Vicksburg," were the next targets of the fleet,

but the hardest pounding failed to produce any effect upon them. Indeed, it may be admitted that the whole work of the navy on the Mississippi was of little use, and would have been wholly ineffective save for the presence of the troops. Island No. 10 fell to the army, not the navy. The batteries at Grand Gulf and Port Hudson defied all attacks from the water-side, and over them the Stars and Bars waved defiantly until Grant's long and patient siege starved Vicksburg into surrender. With the fall of that stronghold the others capitulated without awaiting further attack.

When the fall of Vicksburg had thus left the river clear, Admiral Porter was ordered to take his fleet up the Red River, and clear away any Confederate works that he might find on the banks of that stream. General A. J. Smith, with a strong body of troops, accompanied him; while General Banks was to march his troops overland from Texas, and join the expedition at Shreveport. For several days the gunboats pressed forward up the crooked stream, meeting with no opposition, save from the sharpshooters who lined the banks on either side, and kept up a constant fire of small arms.

Shreveport was reached in safety; and, after a short halt, the flotilla started again on their voyage up the river. They had proceeded but a short distance when a courier came galloping down the river's bank, waving a dispatch, which he handed to Admiral Porter.

"The dispatch read, 'General Banks badly defeated; return.' Here was a dilemma to be placed in,—a victorious army between us and our own forces; a long, winding, shallow river wherein the vessels were continually grounding; a long string of empty transports, with many doubtful captains, who were constantly making excuses to lie by or to land (in other words, who were trying to put their vessels into the

power of the Confederates); and a thousand points on the river where we could be attacked with great advantage by the enemy; and the banks lined with sharpshooters, by whom every incautious soldier who showed himself was shot."

But, though the admiral clearly saw all the dangers he was exposed to, and which he recounts in the foregoing paragraph, he did not propose to return, but pressed forward. He soon reached the scene of battle, and with the big guns of his boats covered the retreat of the troops; then, having done all there was to be done, started down the river.

But now came the great trouble of the whole expedition. Those Southern rivers are accustomed in summer to fall rapidly until they become mere dry ditches, with a narrow rivulet, hardly deep enough to float a row-boat, flowing down the centre. This was the summer season, and the Red River was falling fast. The banks swarmed with gray-coated soldiery, anxious to be on hand to capture the ships. At Grand Écore the "Eastport" became unmanageable, and was blown up. The fleet continued on its way quietly, until a serious obstacle was met. Admiral Porter writes:

One of the "Cricket's" guns was mounted on the upper deck forward, to command the banks; and a crew of six men were kept stationed at it, ready to fire at any thing hostile.

We went along at a moderate pace, to keep within supporting distance of each other. I was sitting on the upper deck, reading, with one eye on the book and the other on the bushes, when I saw men's heads, and sang out to the commanding officer, Goringe, "Give those fellows in the bushes a two-second shell." A moment after the shell burst in the midst of the people on the bank.

"Give them another dose," I said, when, to my astonishment, there came on board a shower of projectiles that fairly made the little "Cricket" stagger. Nineteen shells burst on board our vessel at the first volley. It was the gun-battery of which our prisoner had told us. We were going along at this time about six knots an hour; and, before we could fire another gun, we were

right under the battery and turning the point, presenting the "Cricket's" stern to the enemy. They gave us nine shells when we were not more than twenty yards distant from the bank, all of which burst inside of us; and, as the vessel's stern was presented, they poured in ten more shots, which raked us fore and aft.

Then came the roar of three thousand muskets, which seemed to strike every spot in the vessel. Fortunately her sides were musket-proof.

The "Cricket" stopped. I had been expecting it. How, thought I, could all these shells go through a vessel without disabling the machinery? The Rebels gave three cheers, and let us drift on: they were determined to have the whole of us. They opened their guns on the two pump-boats, and sunk them at the first discharge. The poor negroes that could swim tried to reach the shore; but the musketeers picked off those that were in the water or clinging to the wrecks. It was a dreadful spectacle to witness, with no power to prevent it; but it turned out to be the salvation of the "Cricket." All this took place in less than five minutes.

The moment the "Cricket" received the first discharge of artillery, I went on deck to the pilot-house, saluted by a volley of musketry as I passed along; and, as I opened the pilot-house door, I saw that the pilot, Mr. Drening, had his head cut open by a piece of shell, and the blood was streaming down his cheeks. He still held on to the wheel. "I am all right, sir," he said: "I won't give up the wheel."

Gorringe was perfectly cool, and was ringing the engine-room bell to go ahead. In front of the wheel-house, the bodies of the men who manned the howitzer were piled up. A shell had struck the gun, and, exploding, had killed all the crew,—a glorious death for them.

Porter now found himself in a bad fix. His guns could not be elevated enough to bear on the batteries that stood on the crest of the high bluffs. There was nothing to do but to run by at the best possible rate of speed. Suddenly the engine stopped, and the vessel floated helplessly down the stream. Porter rushed below to discover the trouble. In the engine-room stood the engineer leaning heavily against the throttle. Porter shouted at him, but received no reply; then, putting his hand on the man's shoulder, found him dead. The admiral threw the body aside, pulled open the throttle, and the "Cricket" glided along past the

batteries to a safe refuge downstream. The other ships came down safely, although more or less cut up; and the flotilla continued its retreat down the stream. For a day or two all went smoothly as a holiday excursion; then came a sudden reverse, that, for a time, seemed to make certain the loss of the entire fleet. At Alexandria the Red River bottom is full of great rocks that make it impassable except at the highest water. When Porter's gunboats arrived, they found themselves caught in a trap from which there seemed to be no hope of escape. The army was encamped along the banks of the river, and the soldiers began again their jokes upon Porter's habit of taking gunboats for an overland journey. The army generals began to get impatient, and advised Porter to blow up his ships, as the troops must soon march on and leave him. Porter was sick in bed, but this suggestion aroused him. "Burn my gunboats!" he cried, springing to his feet. "Never! I'll wait here for high water if I have to wait two years." And, indeed, it began to look as though he would be forced to wait nearly that long.

In this time of suspense, there arose a man equal to the emergency. A certain Lieutenant-Colonel Bailey, who had been a Wisconsin lumberman, came to Porter, and suggested that a dam should be built to raise the water fourteen feet above the falls. Porter jumped at the suggestion, and eight thousand men were set to work.

"It will take too much time to enter into the details of this truly wonderful work," writes Admiral Porter. "Suffice it to say that the dam had nearly reached completion in eight days' working-time, and the water had risen sufficiently on the upper falls to allow the 'Fort Hindman,' 'Osage,' and 'Neosho' to get down and be ready to pass the dam. In another day it would

have been high enough to enable all the other vessels to pass the upper falls. Unfortunately, on the morning of the 9th instant the pressure of water became so great that it swept away two of the stone barges which swung in below the dam on one side. Seeing this unfortunate accident, I jumped on a horse, and rode up to where the upper vessels were anchored, and ordered the 'Lexington' to pass the upper falls if possible, and immediately attempt to go through the dam. I thought I might be able to save the four vessels below, not knowing whether the persons employed on the work would ever have the heart to renew their enterprise.

"The 'Lexington' succeeded in getting over the upper falls just in time, the water rapidly falling as she was passing over. She then steered directly for the opening in the dam, through which the water was rushing so furiously that it seemed as if nothing but destruction awaited her. Thousands of beating hearts looked on, anxious for the result. The silence was so great as the 'Lexington' approached the dam, that a pin might almost be heard to fall. She entered the gap with a full head of steam on, pitched down the roaring torrent, made two or three spasmodic rolls, hung for a moment on the rocks below, was then swept into deep water by the current, and rounded to safely into the bank. Thirty thousand voices rose in one deafening cheer, and universal joy seemed to pervade the face of every man present."

After the dam was repaired, the rest of the fleet passed down safely.

With the escape of the Red River flotilla, the career of Admiral Porter on the rivers ended. Indeed, there was but little work for the river navy remaining. The Mississippi, Tennessee, and Cumberland Rivers were opened; and the Confederate works on the smaller streams were unimportant, and could be left to fall with

the fall of the Confederacy, which was near at hand. There was work for fighting sea-captains along the Atlantic coast, and thither Admiral Porter was ordered. He will reappear at the bombardment of Fort Fisher.

CHAPTER XXIV

Farragut at Mobile—Loss of the "Tecumseh"—Craven's Gallant Death—Surrender of the "Tennessee"—The Navy at Charleston—Torpedoes and Submarines—Fall of Fort Fisher.

WHEN the operations of the navy on the Mississippi were completed the two commanders were ordered to new fields of activity—Porter to the Atlantic Coast, where we shall find him aiding in the subjugation of the last Confederate stronghold on that seaboard; Farragut to Mobile, which was the last port of any importance held by the Confederacy along the Mexican Gulf.

It was on a bright August morning in 1864 that Admiral Farragut stood on the deck of his stanch frigate, the "Hartford," that had borne him through so many desperate battles. Around the flagship were clustered the vessels of the Gulf squadron. There was the battered old "Brooklyn," scarred with the wounds of a dozen fights; the "Richmond" and the "Itasca," that received their baptism of fire at the fight below New Orleans. In all there were fourteen wooden vessels and four iron-clad monitors assembled in front of the strongest combination of harbor defences that warships ever yet dared attack. Yet Farragut was there that bright summer morning to enter that bay, and batter the forts of the enemy into subjection. To capture the city was not his purpose,—that he left to the army,—but the harbor forts and the great ram "Tennessee" must strike their colors to the navy.

Before arranging for the attack, the admiral made a reconnoissance, the results of which are thus told by

one of his officers: "On the afternoon of the day of our arrival, Admiral Farragut, with the commanding officers of the different vessels, made a reconnoissance on the steam-tender 'Cowslip,' running inside of Sand Island, where the monitors were anchored, and near enough to get a good view of both forts. On the left, some two miles distant, was Fort Gaines, a small brick-and-earth work, mounting a few heavy guns, but too far away from the ship-channel to cause much uneasiness to the fleet. Fort Morgan was on the right, one of the strongest of the old stone forts, and greatly strengthened by immense piles of sand-bags covering every portion of the exposed front. The fort was well equipped with three tiers of heavy guns, some of them of the best English make, imported by the Confederates. In addition, there was in front a battery of eleven powerful guns, at the water's edge on the beach. All the guns, of both fort and water battery, were within point-blank range of the only channel through which the fleet could pass. The Rebels considered the works impregnable, but they did not depend solely upon them. Just around the point of land, behind Fort Morgan, we could see that afternoon three saucy-looking gunboats and the famous ram 'Tennessee.' The latter was then considered the strongest and most powerful iron-clad ever put afloat; looking like a great turtle, with sloping sides covered with iron plates six inches in thickness, thoroughly riveted together, and having a formidable iron beak projecting under the water. Her armament consisted of six heavy guns of English make, sending a solid shot weighing one hundred and ten pounds,—a small affair compared with the heavy guns at the present time, but irresistible then against everything but the turrets of the monitors. In addition to these means of resistance, the narrow channel in front of the fort had been lined with torpedoes. These

were under the water, anchored to the bottom, and were chiefly in the shape of beer-kegs filled with powder, from the sides of which projected numerous little tubes containing fulminate, which it was expected would be exploded by contact with the passing vessels.

When the reconnoissance was completed, the admiral called a council of his captains in the ward-room of the "Hartford," and announced that the attack would be made early the following morning. The council over, each commander returned to his ship, there to make ready for the dread business of the morrow. The same writer whom we have before quoted tells how the night before a battle is spent by brave men not afraid of death:

At sunset the last order had been issued. Every commanding officer knew his duty, and unusual quiet prevailed in the fleet. The waters of the Gulf rested for a time from their customary tumult, a gentle breeze relieved the midsummer heat, and the evening closed upon us as peacefully as if we had been on board a yatching squadron at Newport. During the early part of the night, the stillness was almost oppressive. The officers of the "Hartford" gathered around the capacious ward-room table, writing what they knew might be their last letters to loved ones far away, or giving to friends messages and instructions in case of death. There were no signs of fear; but, like brave and intelligent men, they recognized the stern possibilities of the morrow, and acted accordingly.

But this occupied but little time; and then, business over, there followed an hour of unrestrained jollity. Many an old story was retold, and ancient conundrum repeated. Old officers forgot for the moment their customary dignity, and it was evident that all were exhilarated and stimulated by the knowledge of the coming struggle. Captain Heywood of the marines proposed a final "walk-around;" Tyson solemnly requested information as to "Which would you rather do or go by Fort Morgan?" and all agreed they would prefer to "do." La Rue Adams repeated the benediction with which the French instructor at the naval academy was wont to greet his boys as they were going into examination: "Vell, fellows, I hope ve vill do as vell as I hope ve vill do." Finally, Chief Engineer Williamson suggested an adjournment to the fore-castle for a smoke, and the smoking club went forward; but somehow smoke had lost its customary flavor, and, after a few whiffs, all hands turned in, to enjoy what sleep would come.

When the morning dawned, the men were called to quarters, and the advance upon the forts was begun at once. It was a foggy morning, and the ships looked like phantom vessels as they moved forward in line of battle, with the "Brooklyn" in the van. Second came the "Hartford," with the admiral high up in the rigging, where he could overlook the whole scene.

Nearly every man had his watch in his hand, and waited for the first shot. To us, ignorant of everything going on above, every minute seemed an hour; and there was a feeling of great relief when the boom of the first gun was heard. This was from the monitor "Tecumseh," at forty-seven minutes past six o'clock. Presently one or two of our forward guns opened, and we could hear the distant sound of the guns of the fort in reply. Soon the cannon-balls began to crash through the deck above us, and then the thunder of our whole broadside of twelve Dahlgren guns kept the vessel in a quiver. But as yet no wounded were sent down, and we knew we were still at comparatively long range. In the intense excitement of the occasion, it seemed that hours had passed; but it was just twenty minutes from the time we went below when an officer shouted down the hatchway: "Send up an army signal-officer immediately: the 'Brooklyn' is signaling." In a moment the writer was on deck, where he found the situation as follows: The "Brooklyn," directly in front of us, had stopped, and was backing and signaling; the tide was with us, setting strongly through the channel, and the stopping of the "Brooklyn" threatened to bring the whole fleet into collision and confusion; the advance vessels of the line were trying to back to prevent a catastrophe, but were apparently not able to overcome the force of the current; and there was danger not only of collision, but of being drifted on shore.

While the fleet was thus embarrassed and hampered, the gunners in the forts were pouring in their shot thick and fast. On the decks of the ships the most terrible scenes of death were visible. Along the port side the bodies of the dead were ranged in long rows, while the wounded were carried below, until the surgeon's room was filled to its last corner. One poor fellow on the "Hartford" lost both legs by a cannon-ball, and, falling, threw up both arms just in time to

have them carried away also. Strange to say, he recovered from these fearful wounds.

Just as the fight was at its hottest, and the vessels were nearing the line, the passage of which meant victory, there went up a cry from the whole fleet, "The 'Tecumseh!' Look at the 'Tecumseh!'" All eyes were turned on the monitor, and every one saw that she was sinking. She staggered for a moment, and went down with a rush, carrying her brave commander and over a hundred of her crew. A few escaped, the last of whom was the pilot. As the pilot was rushing for the hatchway that led to the open air and to life, he met at the foot of a narrow ladder Commander Craven. Craven stepped back, saying gravely, "After you, pilot"; and the pilot passed out. "There was nothing after me," said he, in relating the story afterwards; "for as I sprang out of the hatchway the water rushed in, carrying all behind me to the bottom."

This terrible sight made the ships stop for a moment in some confusion; but Farragut signalled sternly from his flagship, "Go on," and all advanced again. As the fight grew fiercer, the admiral grew tired of being on the second ship in the line, and ordered the "Hartford" to forge ahead.

"On board a war steamer the engines are directed by the tap of a bell, the wires connected with which lead to the quarter-deck. One stroke of the bell means 'go ahead'; two, 'stop'; three, 'back'; and four, 'go ahead as fast as possible.' Leaning down through the shrouds to the officer on deck at the bell-pull, the admiral shouted, 'four bells, *eight bells*, SIXTEEN BELLS! Give her all the steam you've got!' The order was instantly transmitted, and the old ship seemed imbued with the admiral's spirit; and running past the 'Brooklyn' and the monitors, regardless of fort, ram, gun-

boats, and the unseen foe beneath, dashed ahead, all alone, save for her gallant consort, the 'Metacomet.' "

But by this time the fleet was well abreast of the forts, and now, pouring out broadside after broadside, they swept along past the terrible ramparts. The Confederate gunboats had found the fight too hot for them, and had fled for shelter, with the exception of the dreaded "Tennessee," which seemed to be holding itself in reserve. It was but a short time before the vessels were safely past the fort, and out of range, floating on the smooth waters of the inner bay. Then the crews were piped to breakfast, and all hands began to recount their narrow escapes.

But the end was not yet, for the ram "Tennessee" was now ready to try her mettle with the fleet. Lieutenant Kinney of the "Hartford" tells graphically the story of the desperate fight that the ram carried on alone against the whole attacking flotilla.

We were just beginning to feel the reaction following such a season of extreme peril and excitement, when we were brought to our senses by the sharp, penetrating voice of executive officer Kimberly calling all hands to quarters; and a messenger-boy hurried down to us with the word, "The ram is coming." Every man hastened to his post, the writer to the quarter-deck, where the admiral and fleet-captain were standing. The cause of the new excitement was evident at once. The "Tennessee," as if ashamed of her failure, had left the fort and was making at full speed directly for the "Hartford," being then perhaps a mile and a half distant. The spectacle was a grand one, and was viewed by the Rebel soldiers in both forts, who were now out of range of our guns, and lined the walls. Few audiences have ever witnessed so imposing a sight. The great ram came on for a single-handed contest with the fleet. She was believed to be invulnerable, and had powerful double engines by which she could be easily handled; while our monitors were so slow-gaited that they were unable to offer any serious obstacle to her approach. Farragut himself seemed to place his chief dependence on his wooden vessels. Doubtless the crowd of Confederate soldiers who watched the fight expected to see the "Tennessee" sink the Yankee vessels in detail, and the chances seemed in its favor. . . .

Meanwhile, the general signal, "Attack the enemy," had gone up to the peak of the "Hartford;" and there followed a general slipping of cables, and a friendly rivalry to see which could quickest meet the foe. The "Monongahela," with her artificial iron prow, was bravely in the lead, and struck the Rebel craft amidships at full speed, doing no damage to the ram, but having her own iron prow destroyed, and being otherwise injured. Next came the "Lackawanna," with a like result. The huge iron frame of the "Tennessee" scarcely felt the shock, while the wooden bow of the Union ship was badly demoralized. For an instant the two vessels swung head and stern alongside of each other. In his official report, Captain Marchland naïvely remarks:—

"A few of the enemy were seen through their ports who were using *most opprobrious* language. Our marines opened on them with muskets; even a spittoon and a holystone were thrown at them from our deck, which drove them away."

The "Tennessee" fired two shots through her bow, and then kept on for the "Hartford." The two flag-ships approached each other, bow to bow. The two admirals, Farragut and Buchanan, had entered our navy together as boys, and up to the outbreak of the war had been warm friends. But now each was hoping for the overthrow of the other; and, had Buchanan possessed the grit of Farragut, it is probable that moment would have witnessed the destruction of both vessels. For had the ram struck us square, as it came, bows on, it would have ploughed its way half through the "Hartford;" and, as we sank, we should have carried it to the bottom, unable to extricate itself. But the Rebel admiral was not desirous of so much glory; and, just as the two vessels were meeting, the course of the "Tennessee" was slightly changed, enough to strike us only a glancing blow on the port-bow, which left us uninjured, while the two vessels grated past each other. He tried to sink us with a broadside as he went by; but only one of his guns went off, the primers in all the others failing. That gun sent a shell that entered the berth-deck of the "Hartford," and killed five men.

But by this time the unequal conflict was becoming too much even for a man of Buchanan's courage. The armor of the ram was penetrated in several places, and at last came a shot that almost fatally wounded her commander. With the controlling mind that guided her course gone, the ram was useless; and in a moment a white flag fluttered from the shattered stump of her flagstaff. And so closed the naval battle that effectually

ended Confederate rule on the Gulf coast, and earned for Farragut his proudest laurels.

While Farragut was thus bursting through the seaward defences of Mobile, the navy on the Atlantic was striving to capture Charleston, the last considerable city on that seaboard remaining to the Confederates. Here the navy failed. It maintained the blockade, it is true, but the actual capture of the city was left to the army. Fort Sumter in the middle of the harbor, and the cordon of supporting works on the surrounding islands, were too much for even the fleet of iron-clads to pass, so they contented themselves with lying off the harbor and shutting the city off from all its foreign commerce. The city slowly starved. Its wharves were deserted, its streets grown up with grass. Idle negroes loafed in the shade, while the white men went forth to swell the Confederate armies. But the few that remained plotted to break the naval barrier that isolated Charleston from the world. Torpedoes and submarines were used to accomplish this end, neither device new then, neither then successful, but both now in the second decade of the twentieth century vital portions of naval equipment.

Charleston harbor was not first to see efforts to utilize the submarine in war. It was during the year 1777 that occurred the first attempt to use gunpowder in the shape of a submarine torpedo. This device originated with a clever Connecticut mechanic named David Bushnell. His invention covered not only submarine torpedoes, to be launched against a vessel, but a submarine boat in which an adventurous navigator might undertake to go beneath the hull of a man-of-war, and affix the torpedoes, so that failure should be impossible. This boat in shape was not unlike a turtle. A system of valves, air-pumps, and ballast enabled the operator to ascend or descend in the water

at will. A screw-propeller afforded means of propulsion, and phosphorescent gauges and compasses enabled him to steer with some accuracy.

Preliminary tests made with this craft were uniformly successful. After a skilled operator had been obtained, the boat perfectly discharged the duties required of her. But, as is so often the case, when the time for action came she proved inadequate to the emergency. Let her inventor tell the story in his own words:

After various attempts to find an operator to my wish, I sent one, who appeared to be more expert than the rest, from New York, to a fifty-gun ship, lying not far from Governor's Island. He went under the ship, and attempted to fix the wooden screw to her bottom, but struck, as he supposes, a bar of iron, which passes from the rudder hinge, and is spiked under the ship's quarter. Had he moved a few inches, which he might have done without rowing, I have no doubt he would have found wood where he might have fixed the screw; or, if the ship were sheathed with copper, he might easily have pierced it. But not being well skilled in the management of the vessel, in attempting to move to another place, he lost the ship. After seeking her in vain for some time, he rowed some distance, and rose to the surface of the water, but found daylight had advanced so far that he durst not renew the attempt. He says that he could easily have fastened the magazine under the stern of the ship above water, as he rowed up to the stern and touched it before he descended. Had he fastened it there, the explosion of a hundred and fifty pounds of powder (the quantity contained in the magazine) must have been fatal to the ship. In his return from the ship to New York, he passed near Governor's Island, and thought he was discovered by the enemy on the island. Being in haste to avoid the danger he feared, he cast off the magazine, as he imagined it retarded him in the swell, which was very considerable. After the magazine had been cast off one hour, the time the internal apparatus was set to run, it blew up with great violence.

It was almost ninety years after this test that the Confederates tried both torpedo boats and submarines to break the blockade at Charleston. One submarine went to the bottom carrying eight men, whose bones

still repose in their iron sarcophagus in the ooze of the harbor's bed. More was done by what would now be called a "semi-submerged torpedo boat"—a type now being perfected in the new navy. The craft was about twenty-five feet long, shaped like a cigar, built of boiler-iron, and propelled by a screw. She had no smoke-stack, and her deck barely rose above the surface of the water. Running out from her bow was a stout spar fifteen feet long, bearing at its end a huge torpedo charged with two hundred pounds of powder. Just before nine o'clock one night, the lookout on the deck of the frigate "Housatonic" saw this strange object approaching the ship. It was a bright night, with no sea on. As yet torpedoes were hardly known, so the lookout took it for a large fish, and simply watched with interest its playful movements. Not until it came so close that no guns could be brought to bear, did any suspicion of danger enter the lookout's mind. Then there was the roll of the alarm-drums; while the men rushed to the side, and poured a fierce fire from small arms on the mysterious object. The "Housatonic" started her engines, and tried to escape; but, before any headway could be gained, the launch dashed alongside, and a slight jar was felt. Then, with a tremendous roar, a huge column of water was thrown high in air, washing away men and boats from the deck of the warship. A hole large enough to drive a horse through was rent in the hull of the ship. Great beams were broken in twain, the heaviest guns were dismounted, and men were hurled fifty feet into the air. In five minutes the ship had gone to the bottom, and boats from other vessels were picking up the crew. The launch escaped in the excitement.

Thereafter, the Union ships remained off Charleston, harassing the forts, shutting off communication

with the outside world, and supporting the army until February 18, 1865, when the Confederates evacuated the city, and left the fort to the victorious Federals. Five years after the date when Major Anderson with his little band of soldiers had marched out of Sumter, leaving the fort to the enemy, the same gallant officer returned, and with his own hand hoisted the same tattered flag over the almost ruined fortress, amid salvos of artillery and the cheers of a victorious army and navy.

While Charleston, beleaguered by land and by sea, was awaiting its inevitable doom, the only other Confederate stronghold on the Atlantic coast hauled down its flag to the Union army and navy.

This Confederate stronghold was known as Fort Fisher, and had been for a long time a cause of anxiety and worry to the Northern authorities. The war had gone past Fort Fisher. To the north and to the south of it the country was under the sway of the Federal authorities; but there in North Carolina stood the formidable bastions over which floated, in defiance of the laws of the Union, the Stars and Bars of the rapidly dying Confederacy.

To reduce this stronghold, a joint naval and military expedition was fitted out; and General Butler was placed in command of the land forces, while Admiral Porter, torn from his beloved Western rivers, was given command of the fleet. Butler introduced a novel feature at the very opening of the siege. He procured an old steamer, and had her packed full of gunpowder. On a dark night this craft was towed close to the walls of the fort and set afire, in the hopes that she might, in blowing up, tear the works to pieces. But in this the projectors were disappointed; for the explosion, though a terrific one, did absolutely no harm to the Confederate works. When Porter finally did get

into the fort, he asked a soldier what he thought of the attempt to blow them up. "It was a mighty mean trick," responded the Southerner satirically. "You woke us all up."

After this fiasco had set all the world laughing, Butler retired voluntarily, and was succeeded by General Terry; and on Christmas Eve of the year 1864 the fleet began the bombardment, although the land forces were not yet prepared for the assault. It was the grandest armada that was ever arrayed against any fortress. The thunder of nearly five hundred guns rent the air on that Christmas Eve, when carols were being sung in Christian churches throughout the world. Tremendous as was the cannonade, the earthworks were almost a match for it. The fort was not a mass of masonry that these enormous guns might batter down and crumble into rubbish, but a huge bank of earth in which the shells might harmlessly bury themselves. But five hundred cannon are more than a match for any fort, and so they soon proved to be in this instance. Earthworks, guns, and men alike went down before them. The iron-clads were stationed about three-quarters of a mile from the fort, a little farther out were the frigates and heavy sloops, and still beyond were the smaller vessels,—all firing to cover themselves; and all along the whole extended line there blazed one almost continuous sheet of flame, while the rolling thunder of the broadsides, and the defiant answering roar from the guns of the forts, shook earth and sea. Clouds of dust went up from the bastions of the fort, and mingled with the floating smoke above. Within the forts, there was a scene of the most terrible confusion: guns were overturned, piles of cannon-balls were knocked to pieces and scattered about, and two magazines were blown up and scattered fragments all over the parade. In one hour and a quarter all the

gunners were driven to the bomb-proofs, and the forts were silenced, not returning a single shot.

On Christmas morning General Terry arrived with all his transports, and the attack was recommenced. Early in the morning the ships fell into position and began a slow fire, merely to cover the landing of the troops. Again the garrison was driven to the bomb-proofs; and, indeed, so entirely were they chased from their posts, that a Federal soldier went into the fort and brought off a Confederate flag without ever having been seen by the garrison. All the troops were landed; but for some reason the attack was deferred, much to the disgust of the officers of the fleet, who felt sure that the fort could be taken then by a dash.

On the 14th of January the heavy bombardment began again, and again the troops were landed. By night it was seen that every gun on the face of the fort was disabled, and it was decided to storm the works the next day. Sixteen hundred sailors and four hundred marines were told off as the storming-party.

Early in the morning the ships began a fierce cannonade, under cover of which the sailors and marines landed, and threw up light breastworks to cover them until the time should be ripe for the charge. The arrangements contemplated a fierce charge by the blue-jackets, armed with their cutlasses and revolvers; while the marines, remaining in the rifle-pits, should cover the advancing party with a hot fire of musketry. The soldiers were to charge the fort on the other side.

At three o'clock came the signal that all was ready. The whistles of the ships rent the air; and the blue-jackets, with ringing cheers, dashed in a compact body up the beach. But in an instant the Confederate ramparts were black with men, and a furious fire of musketry rained down upon the sailors, who were helpless. The marines in the rifle-pits failed to do what was

expected of them, and the sailors halted for a moment in surprise.

As they stood, a most destructive fire rained down upon them; and the poor fellows, grasping their useless cutlasses, turned and fled down the beach, leaving great heaps of dead and wounded behind. Then the Confederates, thinking the day was theirs, sprang on the ramparts, and began a vigorous cheer just as the Union soldiers came pouring over the landward face of the fort. Then ensued a fierce hand-to-hand fight that lasted for hours. The blue-jackets, encouraged, rushed back to the fight, and now at close quarters swung their cutlasses with deadly effect, until step by step the Confederates were driven out of the fort. Then the fleet opened upon them, and they fled for dear life while a sailor sprang to the flagstaff and pulled down the Confederate flag. Fort Fisher had fallen. With the fall of Fort Fisher, the navy ceased to be a prominent factor in the war. Its work was done. Along the seacoast, and inland as far as navigable rivers extended, the ships of the North had carried the starry banner; and the sailor-boys of the North had defended it. And their opponents, whether on sea or shore, had shown themselves courageous and dashing, and worthy to be numbered as men of the same nation as those who proved the victors.

CHAPTER XXV

The Commerce Destroyers—The "Alabama"—Sinking the "Hatteras"—Battle with the "Kearsarge"—The "Shenandoah" and Other Cruisers.

THE work of the Confederate commerce destroyers forms one of the important chapters of the war. They alone of the ships flying the Stars and Bars did service on the high seas; they only showed the Confederate colors in foreign ports. If their work was not glorious, being in the main the destruction of unarmed vessels, it was a usual and necessary accompaniment of war at that time. Indeed it is still, for the proposition to exempt private property from confiscation at sea, as it is exempted on land, has never been made a matter of international agreement. One can hardly remember without mortification that our first prize in the war with Spain was a lumber steamship, whose captain, knowing nothing of the declaration of war, and seeing a fleet of American warships at anchor off Key West, steamed close to them and raised his Spanish flag in courteous salutation.

The Confederate cruisers during the course of the war were commonly described in the North as "pirates." Later the epithet was softened to "privateers." As a matter of fact they were neither, but regularly commissioned men-of-war whose weakness alone forbade them seeking conflicts with other armed vessels. They had no home ports open to them; no places at which to refit after a hard fight. But they did not cruise in search of spoils or profit, but solely for the public purpose of inflicting upon the enemy all possible damage.



END OF THE ALABAMA

Most famous of all the cruisers was the "Alabama." This vessel was built in England, ostensibly as a merchant-vessel, although her heavy decks and sides, and her small hatchways, might have warned the English officials that she was intended for purposes of war. Before she was finished, however, the customs-house people began to suspect her character; and goaded on by the frequent complaints of the United States minister, that a war-vessel was being built for the Confederates, they determined to seize her. But customs-house officials do things slowly; and, while they were getting ready for the seizure, Captain Semmes, who had taken command of his new ship, duped them, and got his vessel safely out of English waters. Many private detectives and officials were sent by the United States legation to examine the ship while building, but they were successfully blinded to its real character. At last came a retired naval officer whose acute questions showed that he knew what he was about. The next day the "290" put to sea all littered and ill-found as she was.

To disarm suspicion, a large party of ladies and gentlemen were invited aboard; and the ship started down the Mersey, ostensibly on her trial trip, with the sounds of music and popping corks ringing from her decks. But peaceful and merry as the start seemed, it was the beginning of a voyage that was destined to bring ruin to hundreds of American merchants, and leave many a good United States vessel a smoking ruin on the breast of the ocean. When she was a short distance down the river, two tugs were seen putting off from the shore; and in a moment the astonished guests were requested to leave the ship, and betake themselves homeward in the tugs. It is unnecessary to follow the voyage of the "No. 290" to Nassau, and detail the way in which cannon, ammunition, and

naval stores were sent out from Portsmouth in a second vessel, and transferred to her just outside of Nassau. It is enough to say that on a bright, clear Sunday morning, in the latter part of August, 1862, Captain Rafael Semmes, late of the Confederate cruiser "Sumter," a gentleman of middle height, wearing a uniform of gray and gold, his dark moustache waxed to such sharp points that one would think him a Frenchman rather than a Southerner, stood on the quarter-deck of the "No. 290," with his crew mustered before him, reading out his commission from Jefferson Davis, as commander of the Confederate States' steam-sloop "Alabama." As he read, an old master's-mate, standing at the peak-halyards, begins pulling at the ropes. The British ensign, carried through the ship's anonymous days, comes fluttering down, and in its place runs up the white naval ensign of the Confederacy, with the starry Southern Cross in the red field of the corner. Then the reading is ended. Boom! goes the starboard fore-castle-gun. The band bursts forth with the stirring notes of Dixie; and the sailors, after three ringing cheers, crowd forward to wait for further developments. Soon the sailors are summoned aft again, and Captain Semmes addresses them. He tells them that, as the "Alabama" is to be a ship-of-war, they are released from their shipping contract, but are invited to ship under the new plan. He briefly details the purpose of the cruise. The "Alabama" is to be a bird of passage, flitting from port to port, and hovering about the highways of travel, to lie in wait for the merchant-vessels of the North. Armed vessels she will avoid as much as possible, confining her warfare to the helpless merchantmen. It is hardly a glorious programme, but it seems to bear the promise of prize-money; and before the day is over Captain Semmes has shipped a crew of eighty men, and with these the "Alabama" begins

her cruise. The remainder of the sailors are sent ashore, and the "Alabama" starts off under sail, in search of her first capture.

Let us look for a moment at this vessel, perhaps the most famous of all cruisers. She was a fast screw-steamer, of a little more than a thousand tons' burden. Her screw was so arranged that it could be hoisted out of the water; and, as the saving of coal was a matter of necessity, the "Alabama" did most of her cruising under sail. Her hull was of wood, with no iron plating, and her battery consisted of but eight light guns; two facts which made it necessary that she should avoid any conflicts with the powerful ships of the United States navy. Her lines were beautifully fine; and, as she sped swiftly through the water, Captain Semmes felt that his vessel could escape the Northern cruisers as easily as she could overhaul the lumbering merchantmen. The crew was a turbulent one, picked up in the streets of Liverpool, and made up of men of all nationalities.

There followed many days of uneventful cruising which was perhaps as well, for the crew was green, undisciplined, unused to working batteries or even to handling small arms. The voice of the drill master echoed over the ship day after day, but the records are only too clear that even at the end of the "Alabama's" career the crew were ill-disciplined and little used to war. But for taking and destroying unarmed merchantmen they were sufficiently drilled, and prizes fell fast not to their guns, but to the mere threat which the display of them conveyed. There was little adventure in taking and burning unarmed merchantmen. Burned, they had to be, for the Confederates had no open ports into which to send their prizes, and for that reason there was no prize money for the sailors. Indeed the great embarrassment of the cruise was the disposition to be made of the prisoners. After taking

several ships the "Alabama's" decks became so crowded that it was needful to seek a neutral port in order to free the captives. Accordingly she made for Martinique and in that port was discovered by the United States ship "San Jacinto." She was too heavy for the "Alabama's" metal, and Captain Semmes thinking discretion the better part of valor, the Confederate ship remained safe in the neutral harbor. The "San Jacinto" quietly remained outside, thinking that at last the fox was caught. But that same night, with all lights extinguished, and running under full steam, the "Alabama" slipped right under the broadside of her enemy, getting clean away, so quietly that the "San Jacinto" remained for four days guarding the empty trap.

Soon after leaving Martinique, the "Alabama" made a capture which embarrassed the captain not a little by its size. It was Sunday (which Captain Semmes calls in his journal "the 'Alabama's' lucky day"), when a bit of smoke was seen far off on the horizon, foretelling the approach of a steamer. Now was the time for a big haul; and the "Alabama's" canvas was furled, and her steam-gear put in running order. The two vessels approached each other rapidly; and soon the stranger came near enough for those on the "Alabama" to make out her huge walking-beam, seesawing up and down amidships. The bright colors of ladies' dresses were visible; and some stacks of muskets, and groups of blue-uniformed men, forward, told of the presence of troops. The "Alabama" came up swiftly, her men at the guns, and the United States flag flying from the peak. In a moment the stranger showed the Stars and Stripes, and then the "Alabama" ran up the white ensign of the Confederacy, and fired a blank cartridge. But the stranger had no thought of surrendering, and crowded on all steam and fled. The

"Alabama" was no match for her in speed, so a more peremptory summons was sent in the shape of a shell that cut the steamer's foremast in two. This hint was sufficient. The huge paddles ceased revolving, and a boat's-crew from the "Alabama" went aboard to take possession. The prize proved to be the mail steamer "Ariel," with five hundred passengers, besides a hundred and forty marines and a number of army and naval officers. Now Captain Semmes had an elephant on his hands, and what to do with that immense number of people he could not imagine. Clearly the steamer could not be burned like other captures. For two days Captain Semmes kept the prize near him, debating what was to be done, and then released her; exacting from all the military and naval officers their paroles that they would not take up arms against the Confederacy.

After this exploit the "Alabama" went into port for a few days, and then headed into the Gulf of Mexico. Here she steamed about, capturing and burning a few United States merchantmen, until on the 11th of January she found herself off the port of Galveston, where a strong blockading fleet was stationed. And here she fought her first battle.

About four o'clock of a clear afternoon, the lookout in the cross trees of the United States sloop-of-war "Hatteras," stationed off the port of Galveston, hailed the officer of the deck, and reported a steamer standing up and down outside. The stranger was watched closely through marine glasses, and finally decided to be a blockade-runner trying to make the port; and the "Hatteras" immediately set out in pursuit. This was just what Captain Semmes desired. He knew that the ships stationed off Galveston were not heavily armed, and he felt sure that if he could entice one away from the rest of the fleet he would be able to send her to the bottom. Accordingly he steamed away slowly,

letting the "Hatteras" gain on him, but at the same time drawing her out of the reach of any aid from her consorts. When about twenty miles away from the fleet, the "Alabama" slowed down and finally stopped altogether, waiting for the "Hatteras" to come up. The latter vessel came within two hundred yards, and hailed, "What ship's that?"—"Her Majesty's ship 'Petrel,'" answered Semmes. A literal adhesion to truth never characterized men of the old navy when an enemy was encountered. The captain of the "Hatteras" answered that he would send a boat aboard; but, before the boat touched the water, a second hail announced, "We are the Confederate ship 'Alabama,'" and in an instant a heavy broadside crashed into the "Hatteras." Every one of the shots took effect; and one big fellow from the one hundred and five pounder rifle peeled off six feet of iron plating from the side of the "Hatteras," and lodged in the hold. Dazed by this unexpected fire, but plucky as ever, the blue-jackets sprung to their guns and returned the fire. The two ships were so close together that a good shot with a revolver could have picked off his man every time, and the sailors hurled taunts at each other between the volleys. Not a shot missed the "Hatteras": in five minutes she was riddled with holes, and on fire, and a minute or two later the engineer came up coolly and reported, "Engine's disabled, sir"; followed quickly by the carpenter, who remarked, "Ship's making water fast; can't float more than ten minutes, sir." There was nothing for it but surrender, and the flag came down amid frantic yells from the "Alabama" sailors. Semmes got out his boats with wonderful rapidity, and picked up all the men on the "Hatteras"; and the defeated vessel sank in ten minutes. One of the strange things about this battle was the small number of men injured.

Nothing but shells were fired, and they searched every part of the vessels; yet when the fight was over the "Alabama" had but one man wounded, while the "Hatteras" had two men killed and three wounded. The shells played some strange pranks in their course. One ripped up a long furrow in the deck of the "Alabama," and knocked two men high in the air without disabling them. Another struck a gun full in the mouth, tore off one side of it, and shoved it back ten feet, without injuring any of the crew. One man who was knocked overboard by the concussion was back again and serving his gun in two minutes. A shell exploded in the coal of the "Hatteras," and sent the stuff flying all about the vessel, without injuring a man.

With her prisoners stowed away in all available places about her decks, the "Alabama" headed for Jamaica, and cast anchor in the harbor of Port Royal. There were several English men-of-war there, and the officers of the victorious ship were lionized and feasted to their hearts' content. The prisoners were landed, the "Alabama's" wounds were bound up, and she was made ready for another cruise.

Again the weary round of cruising was taken up and the Atlantic patrolled from Land's End to Cape Town. The prizes were invariably burned and the prisoners landed as speedily as possible.

But we cannot follow the "Alabama" in her career about the world. A full account of her captures would fill volumes; and in this narrative we must pass hastily by the time that she spent scouring the ocean, dodging United States men-of-war, and burning Northern merchantmen, until, on the 11th of June, she entered the harbor of Cherbourg, France, and had hardly dropped anchor when the United States man-of-war "Kearsarge" appeared outside, and calmly settled down to wait for the Confederate to come out and fight.

Captain Semmes seemed perfectly ready for the conflict, and began getting his ship in shape for the battle.

The "Kearsarge" had hardly hove in sight when Captain Semmes began taking in coal, and ordered the yards sent down from aloft, and the ship put in trim for action. Outside the breakwater, the "Kearsarge" was doing the same thing. In armament, the two vessels were nearly equal; the "Alabama" having eight guns to the "Kearsarge's" seven, but the guns of the latter vessel were heavier and of greater range. In the matter of speed, the "Kearsarge" had a slight advantage. The great advantage which the "Kearsarge" had was gained by the forethought of her commander, who had chains hung down her sides, protecting the boilers and machinery. Semmes might easily have done the same thing had the idea occurred to him.

It was on Sunday, June 19, that the "Alabama" started out to the duel that was to end in her destruction. Though Sunday was Captain Semmes's lucky day, his luck this time seemed to have deserted him. The "Alabama" was accompanied in her outward voyage by a large French iron-clad frigate. The broad breakwater was black with people waiting to see the fight. The news had spread as far as Paris, and throngs had come down by special trains to view the great naval duel. A purple haze hung over the placid water, through which could be seen the "Kearsarge," with her colors flying defiantly, steaming slowly ahead, and ready for the "Alabama" to come up. Small steamers on every side followed the "Alabama" as near the scene of conflict as they dared. One English yacht, the "Deerhound," with her owner's family aboard, hung close to the combatants during the fight. No duel of the age of chivalry had a more eager throng of spectators.

Now the "Alabama" has passed the three-mile line, and is on the open sea. The big French iron-clad stops; the pilot-boats, with no liking for cannon-balls, stop too. The "Deerhound" goes out a mile or so farther, and the "Alabama" advances alone to meet the antagonist that is waiting quietly for her coming. The moment of conflict is at hand; and Captain Semmes, mustering his men on the deck, addresses them briefly, and sends them to their quarters; and now, with guns shotted, and lanyards taut, and ready for the pull, the "Alabama" rushes toward her enemy. When within a distance of a mile, the first broadside was let fly, without avail. The "Kearsarge," more cool and prudent, waits yet awhile; and, when the first shot does go whizzing from her big Dahlgren guns, it strikes the "Alabama," and makes her quiver all over. Clearly it won't do to fight at long range; and Captain Semmes determines to close in on his more powerful antagonist, and even try to carry her by boarding, as in the glorious days of Paul Jones. But the wary Winslow of the "Kearsarge" will have none of that; and he keeps his ship at a good distance, all the time pouring great shot into the sides of the "Alabama." Now the two vessels begin circling around each other in mighty circles, each trying to get in a raking position. The men on the "Alabama" began to find that their gunpowder was bad and caky; while at the same moment one of the officers saw two big solid shot strike the "Kearsarge" amidships, and fall back into the water, revealing the heretofore unsuspected armor. This was discouraging. Then came a big shot that knocked over the pivot-gun, and killed half its crew. One sailor saw a shot come in a port, glide along the gun, and strike the man at the breach full in the breast, killing him instantly.

The "Kearsarge," too, was receiving some pretty

heavy blows, but her iron armor protected her vulnerable parts. One shell lodged in her sternpost, but failed to explode. Had it burst, the "Kearsarge's" fighting would have been over.

After an hour the officers of the "Alabama" began coming to Captain Semmes with grave faces, and reporting serious accidents. At last the first lieutenant reported the ship sinking, and the order was given to strike the flag. She was sinking rapidly, and the time had come for every man to save himself. The "Kearsarge" was shamefully slow in getting out her boats; and finally when the "Alabama," throwing her bow high in the air, went down with a rush, she carried most of her wounded with her, and left the living struggling in the water. Captain Semmes was picked up by a boat from the yacht "Deerhound," and was carried in that craft to England away from capture. For so escaping, he has been harshly criticized by many people; but there seems to be no valid reason why he should refuse the opportunity so offered him. Certain it is, that, had he not reached the "Deerhound," he would have been drowned; for none of the boats of the "Kearsarge" was near him when he was struggling in the water.

So ended the career of the "Alabama." Her life had been a short one, and her career not the most glorious imaginable; but she had fulfilled the purpose for which she was intended. She had captured sixty-four merchant-vessels, kept a large number of men-of-war busy in chasing her from one end of the world to the other, and inflicted on American commerce an almost irreparable injury.

The "Alabama" was easily the most famous of the Confederate cruisers, but she was not alone among the scourges of the sea. Indeed there would have been a considerable fleet had not the alertness of United States

agents abroad detected many ships building for the Confederacy and compelled the intervention of the responsible governments. Two iron-clad rams built in England were seized by that government. Of six splendid vessels built in France only one succeeded in getting to sea, becoming the cruiser, "Stonewall," but too late in the war to be of service. The biggest and best of the foreign built vessels that actually saw service was the "Shenandoah," originally an English merchant-vessel engaged in the East India trade.

She was large, fast, and strongly built; and the astute agent of the Confederacy knew, when he saw her lying in a Liverpool dock, that she was just calculated for a privateer. She was purchased by private parties, and set sail, carrying a large stock of coal and provisions, but no arms. By a strange coincidence, a second vessel left Liverpool the same day, carrying several mysterious gentlemen, who afterwards proved to be Confederate naval officers. The cargo of this second vessel consisted almost entirely of remarkably heavy cases marked "machinery." The two vessels, once out of English waters, showed great fondness for each other, and proceeded together to a deserted, barren island near Madeira. Here they anchored side by side; and the mysterious gentlemen, now resplendent in the gray and gold uniform of the Confederacy, stepped aboard the "Shenandoah." Then the cases were hoisted out of the hold of the smaller vessel; and, when the "machinery" was mounted on the gun-deck of the "Shenandoah," it proved to be a number of very fine steel-rifled cannon. Then the crew was mustered on the gun-deck, and informed that they were manning the new Confederate ship "Shenandoah"; and with a cheer the flag was hoisted at the peak, and the newly created ship-of-war started off in search of merchantmen to make bonfires of. From Madeira the cruiser made

for the Southern Ocean,—a fresh field not yet ravaged by any Confederate vessel. This made the hunting all the better for the "Shenandoah," and she burned vessels right and left merrily. In the spring of 1865, she put into the harbor of Melbourne, Australia, where her officers were lavishly entertained by the citizens. Thence she proceeded to the northward, spending some time in the Indian Ocean, and skirting the Asiatic coast, until she reached Behring Strait. Here she lay in wait for returning whalers, who in that season were apt to congregate in Behring Sea in great numbers, ready for the long voyage around Cape Horn to their home ports on the New England coast. Captain Waddell was not disappointed in his expectations, for he reached the strait just as the returning whales were coming out in a body. One day he captured eleven in a bunch. With one-third his crew standing at the guns ready to fire upon any vessel that should attempt to get up sail, Waddell kept the rest of his men rowing from ship to ship, taking off the crews. Finally all the prisoners were put aboard three of the whalers, and the eight empty ships were set afire. It was a grand spectacle. On every side were the towering icebergs, whose glassy sides reflected the lurid glare from the burning ships. Great black volumes of smoke arose from the blazing oil into the clear blue northern sky. The ruined men crowded upon the three whalers saw the fruits of their years of labor thus destroyed in an afternoon, and heaped curses upon the heads of the men who had thus robbed them. What wonder if, in the face of such apparently wanton destruction as this, they overlooked the niceties of the law of war, and called their captors pirates!

For two months more Waddell continued his depredations in the northern seas. Many a stout bark from New London or New Bedford fell a prey to his zeal

for a cause that was even then lost. For the Confederacy had fallen. The last volley of the war had been discharged three months before. Of this Captain Waddell was ignorant, and his warlike operations did not end until the captain of a British bark told him of the surrender of Lee and Johnston, and the end of the war. To continue his depredations longer would be piracy: so Captain Waddell hauled down his Confederate flag, and heading for Liverpool surrendered his ship to the British authorities, by whom it was promptly transferred to the United States.

So ended the last of the Confederate cruisers. Of the other notable ones, the "Florida" was lawlessly run down and sunk in a neutral port by a United States man-of-war, and the "Nashville" was shot to pieces by the "Montauk," commanded by Worden of the original "Monitor," under the very guns of a Confederate fort.

CHAPTER XXVI

Close of the War—The Greatest of All Navies—Its Gradual Decadence—The War with Spain—How the Navy Was Re-established—The Destruction of the "Maine"—The Spanish Navy—Dewey at Manila.

WHEN the Civil War ended the United States was easily the first naval power of the world. There were in commission five hundred and twenty-two vessels ranging from tugs to iron-clads. Even Great Britain, that has long clung to the policy of maintaining a navy ten per cent. stronger than the combined navies of any two European nations, lagged far behind this force. But with peace restored there was no need to maintain such colossal fleets. Very properly their reduction was begun. Old vessels, prizes, the river gunboats, all the lumber of the navy were sold. The personnel was reduced. Volunteers were honorably discharged, and the number of blue-jackets was so greatly reduced that at one time there were fifty-nine officers to each ship in commission, and one officer to every five seamen. This was in 1882, which may be set as the low-water mark of the navy. We had then neither modern ships, trained men, nor up-to-date cannon. There were but thirty-one ships in commission, of which all but four were wooden. Indeed an official report declares that in all the navy there was but one high-powered, modern gun. History always repeats itself, and just as the infant navy of the Revolution was allowed to languish until the drumbeat of 1812 awoke the nation, and the navy then built was dissipated until the bugles of '61 aroused the people to the need of a defensive force afloat, so the great force built during the Civil War

was gradually dispersed until the navy of the United States was a thing for nations to laugh at. To-day it ranks second among the navies of the world—Great Britain alone leading it in the number of ships.

What the navy did in the long years of peace between 1865 and the outbreak of the war with Spain in 1898 need hardly be recounted here. It was an era of inaction, given over to a few exploring expeditions, cruising in foreign waters, and attending to the social duties of the representatives of the United States government in distant ports. It was emphatically the period of dry rot in the United States navy.

Yet there were fortunately men in public life—civilians all—who understood the peril of letting the navy go to ruin. One of the first of these was Secretary of the Navy William E. Chandler, who in his report of 1882 spoke of the state of the service as follows:

It is not the policy of the United States to maintain a large navy, but its reputation, honor, and prosperity, require that such naval vessels as it possesses shall be the best which human ingenuity can devise and modern artificers construct. Our present vessels are not such and cannot be made such. They should be gradually replaced by iron or steel cruisers, and allowed to go out of commission.

The next Congress provided for the construction of four steel vessels of a type then modern, but now of course obsolete, for the rapid development of naval construction limits the active life of a battleship to about ten years. The completion of the ships, under the secretaryship of William C. Whitney, left no doubt as to the popularity of the navy with the people. The "White Squadron" of four unarmored ships, none of which would stand the battle test for half an hour to-day, visited all the ports of the Atlantic Coast and awakened enthusiasm wherever anchor was let fall. Thereafter navy appropriation bills found smooth sail-

ing in Congress and fortunately so, for scarce ten years had elapsed when the United States found itself embroiled in a war with Spain—a war which necessarily was settled on the ocean. More by good fortune than by any special prescience the United States in its moment of trial had a navy which, if not great, was equal to the needs of the nation.

A short time after the inauguration of William McKinley as President of the United States in March, 1897, it became apparent that the disordered condition of Cuba under Spanish rule was destined inevitably to become an issue which the United States must help to settle. For two years a great part of the island had been in open and determined revolt against Spanish rule. Though the forces of the king had been able to hold the seaports, thus cutting off the insurgents from regular communication with the outer world and making impotent their efforts to secure recognition from foreign powers, the patriots under Maceo and Gomez held control of the interior, established a government of their own, enforced order, and levied taxes. Enormous sacrifices were made by the Spanish people to re-establish sovereignty in the island. More than three hundred thousand troops were sent thither to be cruelly cut down by plague and pestilence. A nation, long on the verge of bankruptcy, incurred uncomplainingly prodigious additional indebtedness to save for its boy king—Alphonso XIII. was at this time but twelve years old—its most precious possession in the west, the Pearl of the Antilles. Queen Isabella of Spain pawned her jewels that Columbus might have the means to press his voyage of discovery into unknown seas, but in the closing years of the century the people of Spain pawned their national assets, put even themselves and their posterity in pawn, to hold for Spain the last relics of the empire which Columbus won for her.

Though we were forced to draw the sword upon Spain in the cause of humanity and human liberty, the man of reason, and of a sense of justice, will not withhold from the people of that sorely chastened nation admiration for their loyalty and the sacrifices they made in their national cause.

But the Spanish people were cruelly betrayed by their own rulers. The generals whom they sent to Cuba gave less thought to the suppression of the insurrection than to filling their own pockets. Out of the millions and millions of pesetas set aside by an already impoverished people for the needs of war, a great part was stolen by generals and by army contractors. The young conscripts, sent from Spain to a land where the air is pestilential to the unacclimated, were clothed and shod in shoddy; their food invited disease, and when they fell ill it was found that the greed of the generals had consumed the funds that should have provided sufficient hospital service. Comparatively few fell before the bullets or machetes of the insurgents, but by thousands they succumbed to fevers of every kind. Death without glory was the hapless lot of the Spanish conscript.

This almost mediæval warfare at the very front yard of the United States was long a source of continual irritation to the American people. The moral sense of our nation was shocked by the manner in which Spain prosecuted its war upon non-combatants—upon women and children. These were gathered in great camps—herded together under the guns of the Spanish soldiery, and starved. It was estimated, and conservatively, that more than five hundred thousand were thus slowly done to death. Aside from the moral issue, the American people were confronted with positive aggression on the part of Spain. Before patience had been stretched to the breaking point claims were filed with the United States Department of State for Spanish outrages upon

the lives or property of American citizens aggregating sixty millions dollars. But it was not because of Spanish spoliation or aggressions that the United States broke their long record of peace.

History in coming ages, however, will relate, to the unending honor and glory of the American people, that humanitarian considerations, rather than regard for imperilled interests, brought the United States into a war which most emphatically their people did not desire. The great New York newspapers, day by day, printed circumstantial accounts of the frightful sufferings in Cuba. One journal secured a great number of photographs of scenes amid the starving reconcentrados, which, greatly enlarged, were publicly exhibited in all parts of the Union. These pictures, showing the frightful distortions of the human body as the result of long starvation, showing little children, mere skeletons, looking mutely down on the dead bodies of their parents, brought home to the mind of the people the state of life in a neighboring land as no writing, however brilliant, could. A cry went up from every part of the United States that a Christian duty was imposed upon our nation to interfere for the alleviation of such horrible suffering. Charity came to the rescue with free contributions of provisions, and Congress made a heavy appropriation of money for the relief of the Cubans. But everywhere the opinion grew that philanthropy alone could not right this great wrong, but that the strong hand of the United States must reach forth to pluck out the Spaniard from the land he ravaged. And when a number of Senators and Representatives in Congress made journeys to Cuba, and, returning, described in formal addresses at the Capitol the scenes of starvation and misery, this opinion hardened into positive conviction.

Then, almost as if planned by some all-knowing

power, came a great and inexplicable disaster which American intervention inevitable and immediate.

During the latter years of the Cleveland administration the representatives of American interests in Cuba urged that a United States ship-of-war should be permanently stationed in Havana harbor. The request was reasonable, the act in thorough accord with the custom of nations. But, fearing to offend Spain, President Cleveland avoided taking the step and President McKinley for months imitated him. In time this act, which in itself could have had no hostile significance, came to be regarded as an expression of hostility to Spain, and all the resources of Spanish diplomacy were exerted to prevent any American warship from entering Havana harbor. Ultimately, however, the pressure of public opinion compelled the Executive to provide for representation of American authority in the disordered island, and the battleship "Maine" was sent to Havana.

The night of February 15 the "Maine" lay quietly at her anchorage in the Havana harbor. Her great white hull, with lights shining brilliantly from the ports aft where the officers' quarters were, gleamed in the starlight. On the berth deck the men swung sleeping in their hammocks. The watch on deck breathed gratefully the cool evening air after the long tropic day. Captain Sigsbee was at work in his cabin, and the officers in the wardroom were chatting over their games or dozing over their books. The lights of the town and of the ancient fortress of Morro shone brightly through the purpling light. Not far away the Spanish man-of-war "Alfonso XIII." lay at her moorings, and an American merchantman, brightly lighted, was near. The scene was peaceful, quiet, beautiful. True, in the minds of many officers and men on the American warship there was a lurking and indefinable sense of danger.

Their coming had been taken by the Spaniards in Havana as a hostile act. Though all the perfunctory requirements of international courtesy had been complied with, salutes interchanged, visits of ceremony paid and returned, there was yet in the Spanish greeting an ill-concealed tone of anger. In the cafés Spanish officers cursed the Yankees and boasted of their purpose to destroy them. On the streets American blue-jackets, on shore leave, were jostled, jeered, and insulted. Yet the ill-temper of the Spaniards, though apparent, was so ill-defined that no apprehension of a positive attack was felt. As is the practice on men-of-war, however, the utmost vigilance was maintained. Only the employment of a boat patrol and the use of torpedo nettings were lacking to give the "Maine" the aspect of a ship in an enemy's harbor.

Then came the disaster that shocked the world. A disaster in which it is impossible not to suspect the element of treachery. A disaster which if purely accidental, occurring to a hated ship in a port surrounded by men who were enemies at heart, was the most extraordinary coincidence in history. The story is brief. It is still shrouded in mystery. After more than twenty years we know little more of the direct cause of the disaster than we did when the unknown hand applied the spark that sent the vessel to the bottom.

This much we know: At about half-past nine those on the "Maine" who lived to tell the tale heard a sudden dull explosion, with a slight shock, then a prolonged, deep, furious roar, which shook the ship to its very vitals. The people on the other ships in the harbor saw the whole forward portion of the "Maine" suddenly become a flaming volcano belching forth fire, men, huge pieces of steel, and bursting shells. Portions of the ship's hull rained down on decks a thousand yards away. When the first fierce shock of the ex-

plosion was past, it was seen that the "Maine" was on fire and was rapidly sinking.

How wonderful is the power of discipline upon the human mind! On the great battleship, with hundreds of its men blown to pieces or penned down by steel débris to be drowned in the rapidly rising waters, there was no panic. Captain Sigsbee, rushing from his cabin door, is met by the sergeant of marines who serves him as orderly. Not a detail of naval etiquette is lacking. Sergeant William Anthony salutes:

"I have to report, sir, that the ship is blown up and is sinking," he says, as he would report a pilot boat in the offing.

The captain reaches the deck to find his officers already at work, the men who have not been injured all at their stations. Boats are lowered and ply about the harbor to rescue survivors. Though the flames rage fiercely, and the part of the ship which they have not yet reached is full of high explosives, there is no panic. At the first alarm every man has done what years of drill and teaching have taught him to do. The after-magazines have been flooded, the boats' crews called away. Even preparations for a fight had been attempted. Lieutenant Jenkins, hearing the first explosion, sprang so quickly for his station at a forward gun that he was caught in the second explosion and slain. Though a bolt from heaven or a shock from hell had struck the "Maine," it brought death only—not fear nor panic.

The work of rescuing survivors and caring for the wounded was pushed apace, for the ship sunk rapidly, until only her after-superstructure was above the water. Boats from the Spanish man-of-war joined in the work of mercy and her officers, as though conscious that the suspicion of treachery was first in every man's mind, exerted themselves in every way to show solicitude for

the wounded and sorrow for the disaster. When all was done that could be done, and the roll of the ship's company was called, it was found that two hundred and sixty-six brave Americans were lost in Havana harbor—a friendly port. Some lie there yet; others lie in honored graves in the national cemetery at Arlington.

Even before this disaster the voice of the American people, save for a few powerful forces in the financial circles of New York, had been for war. Now the war spirit could no longer be resisted. The responsible government, it is true, was opposed to it. President McKinley, who had seen something of war in the cruel days of '61-'65, was above all a man of peace, a gentle, amiable personality who strove with all the power and prestige of the presidency to avert the storm which could not be checked. For the nation believed the destruction of the "Maine" and its gallant crew to have been the treacherous work of Spaniards. This general conviction was in no wise altered when a Spanish court of inquiry presented findings exactly the reverse of those of the United States court, declaring the ship had been blown up by an explosion of her own magazines. After years of delay on the part of Congress, what remained of the "Maine" was lifted from the bottom of the harbor, towed out to sea, and sunk in deep water amid appropriate ceremonies on March 16, 1912. Sixty-six bodies were recovered. These were buried at the national cemetery at Arlington. The mainmast was erected as a memorial at Arlington, and the other mast was presented to the Republic of Cuba likewise for the erection of a memorial.

Among the American people there was no doubt as to what sent the "Maine" to the ooze of Havana harbor and the demand for war could not be withstood. Admiral (then Captain) Robley D. Evans expressed the popular view when he said:

"The admiral in command of the United States fleet at Key West should have sailed for Havana on getting news of the 'Maine's' destruction. He should have reduced the forts, seized the city, discovered the assassins, and hanged them."

"But that would have been defiance of the orders of the Navy Department," responded his auditor, aghast.

"Perhaps so," admitted Evans, "but the man who did it would have been the next President of the United States."

Even while the "Maine" court of inquiry was in session the government was preparing for war. Without a dissenting vote Congress voted fifty million dollars to be at the sole command of the President and to be expended in preparation for hostilities. Much of this was used in strengthening the navy and more would have been so expended had there been ships to buy. The experience of the Navy Department at this time should be a lesson for all time to those who fatuously think a navy can be hastily extemporized in time of need. With money in plenty the American agents could find but two purchasable warships, the property of Brazil, and these proved of little service. Not one battleship could be bought. Merchant vessels, yachts, and tugs were hastily bought and armed, but when the war was actually declared its issue would have been doubtful had any nation of greater sea power than Spain been our adversary. As it was, the situation did not lend itself to confidence on the part of the American people. The Spanish navy, *on paper*, was quite equal or even superior to that of the United States and none could tell how inferior it was in marksmanship and morale, how it had been undermined and weakened by graft, and how utterly unfit it was to enter upon the serious activities of war. The foreign reviews at the opening

of the war were almost a unit in predicting victory for the Spanish forces afloat. There was panic along our New England coast from the very first days of the war. Valuables were hastily packed in the seaboard towns and sent to interior points. Imaginary Spanish cruisers were seen as plentifully as sea serpents in summer-resort time, or German warships in England to-day. But this subject may be dismissed with the statement that at no time was any American fort or city menaced by a Spanish ship, nor did the Spanish navy undertake any offensive operations whatsoever. Only two naval battles were fought and both of those were won by the Americans with so little loss of life as to amaze all observers, domestic and foreign.

War brings its surprises no less than its disasters. When on April 25, 1898, the Congress of the United States declared a state of war to exist between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Spain few of the American people imagined that the first blow would be struck in far off Asiatic waters where American ships were scarcely known, and American interests were but trivial. In the Philippine Islands Spain had then one of the great colonies which one flaunted the Spanish flag all over the world. More than seven million natives were there, in a chronic state of unrest and insurrection due to the same sort of Spanish misrule that forced the issue in Cuba.

In the harbor of Hong Kong lay at anchor an American squadron of six ships under command of Admiral George Dewey. The ships were not of a type that would gain entrance to a fighting squadron in this day of the "Dreadnought" type. Not one battleship, or armored ship was on the roll. The most powerful of all was the flagship "Olympia," a mere protected cruiser. Three cruisers, unprotected, a revenue cutter, and a collier made up the total. In all fifty-three great

guns were mounted, eight-inch, six-inch and five-inch rifles, while the secondary batteries numbered eighty-three guns, from six-pounders down. The admiral in command was a veteran of the Civil War who had served with Farragut at New Orleans and Mobile.

In time of peace the war record of a subaltern is quickly forgotten and Dewey patiently climbed the ladder of promotion until 1898 found him a commodore and in command of the Asiatic squadron, without anybody's remembering particularly that this officer in far Hong Kong had seen fighting and knew how to bear himself under fire. It is a significant fact that when he had won the first great victory of the war, and the newspapers were searching everywhere for stories illustrative of his character, it was discovered that he had chiefly impressed himself on the Washington mind by his excessive punctiliousness in matters of dress.

International law prohibits the use of a neutral port by the ships of a power at war for more than one day at a time, so even had Dewey not received prompt orders to act he would have been forced to leave Hong Kong within twenty-four hours of the declaration of war. But the very dispatch that brought intelligence of the declaration brought his orders as well. "Proceed at once against the Philippines," it read. "Commence operations at once, particularly against the Spanish fleet. You must capture vessels or destroy." The day following the fleet sailed.

The Spanish force afloat which it had to meet and to destroy was vastly inferior. Admiral Montojo had two cruisers, eleven gunboats, and twenty-five "mosquito" gunboats, as the smallest craft were called. In all they mounted only forty-four guns in their main batteries, more than half of which were of but 4.7 inch calibre. Their small guns numbered eighty-one. This fact makes clear the overwhelming victory which

Dewey won, but does not detract in the slightest degree from his courage in inviting the conflict. For the Spanish fleet, weak though it was, lay anchored under the batteries at Cavité. To reach it Dewey had to pass through the narrow entrance to Manila Bay, commanded by forts with modern guns, and through a channel presumably blocked by mines. This last and greatest menace was dared by Dewey as calmly as did his old commander Farragut at Mobile Bay, when looking upon the "Tecumseh" sinking before him, he cried to his captain, "Damn the torpedoes. Go ahead."

On the way to the entrance to Manila Bay Dewey had read to the men on each ship a bombastic address which the Spanish captain-general had delivered to his forces. Too long to be quoted in full here, a paragraph from it may be of interest as showing the sentiments with which Spain entered upon the war in the Far East.

A squadron manned by foreigners, possessing neither instruction nor discipline, is preparing to come to this archipelago with the ruffianly intention of robbing us of all that means life, honor, and liberty. Pretending to be inspired by a courage of which they are incapable, the North American seamen undertake, as an enterprise capable of realization, the substitution of Protestantism for the Catholic religion you profess, to treat you as tribes refractory to civilization, to take possession of your riches as if they were unacquainted with the rights of property, and to kidnap those persons whom they consider useful to man their ships or to be exploited in agricultural or industrial labor.

Vain designs! Ridiculous boastings!

On the night of April 30 the American ships arrived at the entrance of Manila harbor, unseen by the sentries on the forts. It was known that Montojo was inside, and every light was extinguished and every noise hushed on the Yankee ships, for the admiral had planned a midnight entrance to the stronghold. The ships were stripped for action, boats covered with canvas, nettings

spread to prevent splinters from flying, partitions removed, and ammunition hoists and bullet shields put up. At midnight the entrance to the harbor began, the ships steaming in single column at about six knots an hour, with the "Olympia" leading. Strangely enough not a single torpedo or mine in the channel was exploded, though the Spaniards discovered the advance of the ships and opened fire from the forts. The first shot in answer was fired by a gunner on the "Boston" without orders. He saw the flash of a gun on a shore battery and instantly fired his piece without altering its elevation. That dismantled a gun in the Spanish works and killed thirty men.

For a few hours after passing the forts the wearied blue-jackets slept at their guns. With the approach of day came the signal from the flagship to prepare for action. In the gray dawn the Spanish fleet could be seen about two miles distant, at such a point that their fire could be re-enforced by the guns of the forts.

A most graphic story of the action that followed, as seen from the view-point of "the man behind the gun," whom Captain Mahan eulogizes, is told by Chief Gunner Evans of the "Boston," from whose narrative I quote the following paragraphs:

We were steaming very slowly, but increasing speed as the dawn increased. In the gray daylight we could make out a line of ships anchored in front of the city. Then we steamed ahead faster. The ships ahead proved to be merchantmen, and at daylight we could discern the Spanish fleet further down the bay, and then it was "Full ahead!" The Spanish fleet did not advance to meet us, and apparently made no move on the defensive. Possibly our audacity had for the moment paralyzed them. But it was not for long. In twenty minutes or so they opened a terrific cannonading at long range. The batteries and forts around Manila opened fire at the same time. Every man on the ship was now wide awake and at his post. I knew that it would not be long before there would be some hot work, and I served my men with a cup of coffee and a piece of hardtack, and a little later gave them each a drink of whiskey and water.

According to orders, we did not respond to the Spanish guns until our ships came into position. Then the flagship opened fire, and then I followed with two hours of cannonading which I do not believe has ever been equalled in naval warfare. The shots from the "Olympia" were the prearranged signal for the other ships to do the same.

We soon discovered that the batteries of Cavité were very heavily mounted, and the ordnance included several ten-inch guns, and we were not long in finding out that the "Don Antonio de Ulloa" and the "Reina Cristina," the flagship, carried much heavier guns than we thought. We began to fear that our ships had met their match. As hot as the battle was, the heat of the sun was equally so, and I had my men who were bringing up the ammunition throw off every vestige of clothing except their shoes.

The Spanish guns had opened upon us at 5.10 A.M., and it was fully 5.40 before we began to reply. But when we did, we made every shot tell, for our gunners demonstrated that their opponents were no match for them in accuracy, although the Spaniards had every advantage and should have known the exact range of every point in the harbor, while of the American fleet not a single gunner had ever as much as been in the harbor before.

By 6.30 we had circled three times, and were starting for the fourth when the Spanish admiral came out in the "Reina Cristina" and gallantly assailed us; but we made it hot for him. I don't know how in the world he escaped with his life. While he was standing on the bridge a shot from one of our ships—I think it was the "Concord"—blew the bridge clean over; in fact, shot it right from under him, but the Admiral was apparently uninjured, for a few minutes later I saw him walking the deck as calmly as though he was on parade. It was getting too hot for him, and he evidently saw that his ship was no match for us, and he turned to get back to his fleet.

Just as the "Reina Cristina" swung around an eight-inch shell from the port battery, which I was tending, struck her square astern, and set her on fire. By this time other gunners had got the range, and if ever a ship was riddled it was the "Reina Cristina." I do not think it was fifteen minutes from the time the shell from the "Boston" struck her when she went down with, it is said, over two hundred men. The Admiral, however, had escaped in a small boat and made for the "Isla de Cuba," where he again hoisted his flag.

After we had circled five times, we withdrew. The smoke was so dense that we could hardly distinguish friend from foe. Our men had worked three long hours with scarcely a mouthful of food. I had, however, kept my men well supplied with whiskey and water. I gave each a small drink about every twenty minutes.

After we had withdrawn, and the clouds of smoke had lifted enough so that we could see, Admiral Dewey signalled the ships to

report the number of killed and wounded. It would have done your heart good to have heard the shouts and cheers that went up as ship after ship ran up the signal to indicate that she had no killed and none wounded worth reporting. It was one of the most thrilling moments of the entire battle.

It was a wise move on Admiral Dewey's part in withdrawing at that moment, for our men were rapidly becoming exhausted. For my own part I do not think I could have held out another half hour, and neither could my men. We were not only wearied physically, but the nervous strain was something awful. I called my men into the gunroom and served each with a good stiff drink of whiskey and told them to take all the rest they could get. I went into the chartroom, as it was about the coolest place on the ship, and threw myself on the chart table. I was too nervous to sleep and too exhausted to move. I just lay there sort of dazed.

Soon after ten o'clock we advanced again, and the "Baltimore" opened the fight. As many of the Spanish ships had been disabled, what we most feared now was the forts. The "Baltimore" sailed right into the very teeth of the guns, any one of which could have annihilated her, and only bad marksmanship of the Spanish gunners saved her from destruction, and she did not retreat until she had practically silenced the fort.

My ship, the "Boston," was perhaps struck oftener during the battle than any of the American ships, but in every instance it was small shot or shell, making a glancing blow that did no particular harm. After the first hour or so of the battle, if we had received a damaging shot, the chances are that we would have all gone down, for out of all the ship's boats, only two were of any value, the others having been shattered to pieces.

We were circling in line with the other ships when the "Isla de Cuba" swung around to give us a broadside. The guns in the port battery got the range on the "Isla de Cuba," and sent in a shot that struck in amidships and made her tremble from stem to stern. I was watching at the porthole at the time. The other guns of the "Boston" followed the example of the port gunner, and for a few minutes it seemed that the "Isla de Cuba" was crumbling to pieces like a falling building in an earthquake. We turned, and the starboard guns did equally good work, and when the Spanish flag came tumbling down we let out a yell that was heard around the world, figuratively speaking, if not literally.

I can never forget the scene after the battle. The forts were smoking, and scattered all through the bay were the hulks of once magnificent Spanish ships. Some were drifting helplessly about, as though the men on board seemed not to know what to do and had lost their heads entirely. Rigging was trailing in the water and only remnants remained of the lifeboats. Over at one end of the bay was the wreck of the once magnificent "Reina Cristina."

Further along were smoking hulks, and here and there could be seen only the masts and rigging above water.

To add to the horror of the scene, hundreds of corpses came floating by, and it seemed as though the bay was full of dead Spaniards, although I believe less than a thousand were killed. I really think that the sight in the harbor that afternoon impressed men more with the horrors of war than did anything which occurred during the actual battle.

During all the fight my men, except for a little while during the interval for breakfast, were stripped to the bare skin and wore only their shoes. The thermometer was over one hundred, and to this was added the heat of the fire of the guns, until it made one's blood fairly boil.

Outclassed and outfought as they were, the Spaniards showed many instances of conspicuous gallantry. The dash of Admiral Montojo into the very forefront of the fight in the "Reina Cristina" was magnificent, though fatal. He saw that at long range the American fire was too much for the lighter Spanish guns and determined to risk all in an effort to come to closer quarters. But the pitiless shells showed him no mercy. His ship was destroyed and of her crew of four hundred and ninety-three only seventy escaped unhurt. Transferring his flag to the "Isla de Cuba" the admiral fought on undaunted to the end. The captain of one of the Spanish ships nailed her flag to the mast, and fought until she sank with guns all blazing.

When all the Spanish ships were destroyed or forced to surrender attention was turned to the forts. Those on the city's wall very promptly ceased firing when word was sent that if they persisted the guns of the fleet would be turned on the city itself. The forts at Cavité and at the entrance to the bay withstood but a brief time the attack of the lesser ships of the American fleet, when they hauled down their flags. Before sun-down on that Sunday, May 1st, 1898, Manila Harbor was held by the United States navy and the city was at the mercy of the ships. Moreover the victory had

been almost bloodless for the Americans. When the flagship signalled for reports of casualties, ship after ship signalled "no dead" and few reported any wounded. Seven only were injured and every American ship was in condition to take the sea again in the face of an enemy. Of the Spanish ships three were sunk and eight burned either by the action of their crews or by the shells from Dewey's ships. Three hundred and eighty-one Spaniards were killed on the ships and in the forts. The victory was overwhelming and ended Spain's domination in the Philippines and in Asiatic waters forever.

When the news of this victory reached Washington five days later—the Manila cable had been cut and messages had to be sent by ship to Hong Kong—the Secretary of War, General Alger, called on the Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Long, to express congratulations. "General," said the Secretary of the Navy, "the navy has done its part. It is now the army's turn." So it proved. For weeks Dewey's fleet remained in Manila Bay, holding the city tranquil under its guns, but making no attempt to occupy it until General Wesley Merritt arrived in July. On August 15th, under cover of a fierce fire from the ships, the American troops attacked the walled city and after a feeble resistance marched in triumphantly. Then fell forever Spanish power in Asiatic lands.

CHAPTER XXVII

On the Atlantic Coast—Mobilizing the American Fleet—The Blockade of Cuba—The "Winslow" at Cardenas—Searching for Cervera—The Race of the "Oregon"—The "Merrimac" at Santiago—Spain's Fleet Destroyed and Spanish Power Ended.

ALTHOUGH the guns of the war with Spain roared first in the far away harbor of Manila, the greater operations and the more trying times of the navy came along our own Atlantic seaboard. Looking back upon the early days of the struggle, and with knowledge now of the impotence of Spain, one can but be amused and a bit disgusted by the panic which seized upon people of coastwise towns and cities. Irrational though it was, the panic resulted in splitting the available ships of the navy—none too many at best—into two fleets, one for home defence against an enemy who never sighted our coasts, the other for cruising in the Gulf and the Caribbean and for blockading the ports of Cuba and Porto Rico. It was clear at Washington that the war must be fought on our side of the Atlantic. European sentiment, particularly on the Continent, was distinctly unfriendly to the United States. A mere bombardment and capture of Spanish forts by our ships, without soldiers to hold them or to carry the war into the interior would have been resented by all Europe and might have won powerful allies for our foe. But to take an expedition of one hundred thousand troops across the tossing Atlantic, land them on a hostile coast, and maintain them three thousand miles from any base save such a Spanish port as the navy might capture was obviously a perilous programme. Spain in accepting the chal-

lenge to fight on this side of the ocean showed no superior courage, but merely availed herself of facilities she possessed. Her army was already in Cuba. There she possessed ports heavily fortified where her ships might refit in safety. Porto Rico too was hers, to serve as a stopping point for her ships after the long transatlantic voyage.

When war was declared the roster of the United States naval ships in Atlantic waters showed one hundred and seventy-seven vessels of which four were battleships, two armored cruisers, six monitors, twelve protected cruisers, and three unprotected cruisers. The rest were a mixed lot of craft ranging from great transatlantic liners transformed into cruisers, down to converted yachts and tug boats. Because of the widespread panic along our northern Atlantic coast the really effective fighting force was divided into two squadrons, one the Flying Squadron, being stationed at Hampton Roads and charged with the duty of detecting and destroying any Spanish expedition which should attempt to attack any portion of our coastwise territory. But most of the more powerful vessels were ordered to Key West there to await the formal declaration of war. When that action was taken by Congress there were in that harbor the battleships "Iowa" and "Indiana," the monitors "Amphitrite," "Terror," and "Puritan," the armored cruiser "New York" and unarmored cruisers "Cincinnati," "Detroit," "Nashville," "Marblehead" and "Montgomery," beside five gunboats and six torpedo boats. The wait had been long, for the ships had been gathered in the harbor of the arid, sandy little island for many weary weeks. It was as ill-fitted a spot for a naval rendezvous as could well be found. The harbor was so shallow that the battleships could not enter, but had to lie at anchor seven miles in the offing. Water had to be brought from the mainland, and fresh

provisions were at a premium. Pent up here the navy chafed under inaction. When the "Maine" was blown up all felt that the leashes would be slipped, but only more delay followed. Even when orders came for active service on the 22nd of April they were greeted with a sigh, for instead of a dash at the enemy's capital or even a vigorous attack on the forts defending it, the most wearisome service of all was ordered, namely the blockade.

Throughout the war and even for some time thereafter there was a general public discontent that the navy in Cuban waters did not emulate Farragut at New Orleans and Mobile, or Dewey at Manila, by making an attack on the forts at Havana and Santiago and capturing the two cities. It was not widely known that this was exactly the plan which Admiral Sampson—cool-headed a commander as he was—submitted to the Navy Department. He believed that the batteries at Havana were vulnerable, and that a successful blow struck there twenty-four hours after the declaration of war would end the whole conflict. But the plan was rejected, first because no army was in readiness to occupy the city if taken, and second, because the loss or crippling of even one United States battleship with Spain's squadron still within a fortnight's steaming of our coasts would have been dangerous. Another reason not formally given but well understood, was the hostility of Europe which made it vital to save every ship we had ready for instant service. So Sampson's fighting plan was set aside and the tamer, but no less efficient, blockade was substituted. The eager navy officers and the people of the United States were not the only ones who were disappointed by this decision. Its wisdom was shown by the later utterances of high Spanish officials. "They," (the Americans) wrote a Spanish captain of artillery in Cuba, "realized that owing to our

lack of naval power, the island of Cuba, separated from Spain by a long distance, and without direct means for supporting its army and people as a result of the agricultural conditions, could be easily cut off and reduced to starvation without much effort or bloodshed. . . . It would have been of good effect if we had compelled the enemy to engage in a battle against Havana. A victory there would have cost them much time and blood." But both the Spaniards and the too eager Americans were disappointed and the blockade was ordered.

There is little exciting about the history of a blockade to the men engaged in it. The constant vigilance, the frequent pursuit of strange ships, and the occasional capture of a prize lend zest to the service. But in this blockade of Cuba prizes were few and far between. Its warlike value rested not in what was done on the ocean, but rather in its effect on those on land. What that effect was may be fairly guessed from the narrative of a neutral visitor to Havana, Commander Jacobsen of the foreign cruiser "Geier," who wrote:

We returned to Havana August 1st. Few changes were visible in the city itself. There was not as yet an actual famine, but the poorer classes were evidently much worse off than they had been on our former visit, for the number of beggars in the streets had increased. Crowds of poor people would come alongside the ships in boats to get something to eat. . . . "If the Americans would only attack Havana," the people would say, "they would soon find out what the garrison of the capital is made of. They would get their heads broken quick enough. But Uncle Sam is only beating about the bush. He is not going to swallow the hot morsel and burn his tongue and stomach." No wonder that the Spanish troops, condemned to inactivity, poorly fed, cut off from the whole world, and without prospect of relief, were anxious for the end to come. . . . But I have information from reliable sources that on August 12th the military administration of Havana had provisions on hand for three months longer. But what use would have been a further resistance on the part of the Spanish garrison? The United States government only needed to make the blockade more rigid. That

would necessarily have sealed the fate of Havana sooner or later. A fortress in the ocean, cut off from the mother country, can be rescued only with the assistance of the navy. The enemy who has control of the sea need only wait patiently until the ripe fruit drops into his lap.

History justified the wisdom of the Administration in refusing to risk ships or men at Havana. In the end the Spanish capital was taken without the loss of a life. But while the blockade was in progress there were some spirited engagements, the story of which is worth the telling.

The first of these was a gallant dash into the harbor of Cardenas on the northern shore of Cuba. Four United States ships were engaged, the "Machias," "Wilmington," "Hudson," and the little torpedo boat "Winslow." It may be mentioned in passing that one of the curiosities of the Cuban blockade was the use of torpedo boats as blockaders—a service for which, because of their small size and limited coal capacity, they were utterly unfitted. The Cardenas harbor is almost circular in shape, and very shallow, so that the larger vessels among the American blockaders were unable to go far within it. But from Cubans it was learned that three Spanish gunboats were inside and after vainly trying to lure them out it was determined to go in and destroy them. The enterprise was not without danger. The main channel was mined and impassable, but a secondary channel was traced out by soundings and successfully passed by three of the ships—the "Machias" being too large to enter. Progress into the harbor was slow, the lead being cast continually to determine whether there was water enough for the "Wilmington." Finally that ship was forced to halt about one mile from the shipping along the city front. Amid the forest of masts of small vessels at the wharves the gunboats could not be picked out, and as it was

the policy of the navy throughout the war to avoid the wanton destruction of private property, the little "Winslow," drawing but six feet of water, was sent in to pick them out. The commander of the "Winslow," Lieutenant Bernadou, had a reputation for daring verging almost upon recklessness. Only a few days before he had run in so close to the entrance of Cardenas harbor that he narrowly escaped destruction or capture by the very gunboats he was now to spy out. And so on this occasion instead of merely seeking the location of the gunboats Lieutenant Bernadou dashed into an encounter with a superior force that quickly put his vessel out of commission, and resulted in the death of the only line officer killed during the whole war. The "Winslow" was a mere pigmy in a fight—built for speed and designed to let slip her deadly torpedoes and then run for safety. But at Cardenas she dashed into battle with all the confidence of a battleship. Her sides were not merely vulnerable to shells, but to the bullets from Mauser rifles with which the Spanish forces were armed. Her errand was to locate and engage three gunboats, any one of which was superior to her in power, and which were further aided by land batteries and by sharpshooters in the houses of the town. The "Winslow" was armed only with three one-pounder rapid fire guns. Her crew were protected neither below nor on deck. Even the conning tower was of such light metal that the enemy's shots entered it readily and almost perforated the plates of the opposite side.

Heading for the city's wharves where he felt sure of finding the gunboats, Bernadou saw a row of buoys bearing red flags that appeared to, and did indeed, mark the channel. But they had a more sinister purpose as he was destined to discover quickly, for hardly had he swung his little craft into the lane thus marked when

a battery near the town opened fire upon him with an accuracy that showed the flags were there to mark the range. The very second shot pierced the "Winslow's" bow, cutting the steering chains and leaving her unmanageable under the enemy's guns. Then the gunboats opened fire, and one of their first missiles wounded Bernadou seriously, but bandaging his hurt he rushed aft to get the hand steering gear in order. By this time the shells were falling fast, for the torpedo boat lay in a zone of which the enemy had the exact range, and was powerless to move out of it as one boiler was wrecked and one engine disabled. It was while the ship's people were trying to operate with the one remaining engine that a shell fell among a group gathered amidships, killing Ensign Worth Bagley and dangerously wounding several seamen. One man was knocked overboard by the concussion but hauled aboard again unhurt.

By this time the torpedo boat was thoroughly out of commission but her flag was flying defiantly and no thought of surrender entered the minds of her defenders. In the distance the "Wilmington," unable to render assistance because of the shoal water, was pounding away at the forts with her four-inch rifles, while the tug "Hudson" was steaming up to take the disabled "Winslow" in tow. After repeated efforts the rescue was successfully effected and the torpedo boat with her crew of five dead and many wounded was towed to safety, while the "Wilmington" took savage revenge upon the town with her heavy shells. Curiously enough in this utterly trivial action there were more sailors of the United States killed than in the epoch-making victories of Dewey at Manila and the later triumphs of Sampson and Schley at Santiago.

To the events which led up to the latter battle we

may properly proceed without giving further attention to the incidents of the blockade. Good service was done by the navy all along the Cuban coast and at Porto Rico, but the attention of the country and of its naval defenders was centred upon the Spanish fleet then mysteriously making its way to our side of the Atlantic. It will be increasingly difficult as the years go by to understand the dread and positive trepidation with which the people of the United States received the reports of the movements of this phantom fleet. History now records that its admiral in command knew it to be in no condition for the battle and hardly for sea. Its annihilation at the hands of the Yankee blue-jackets showed how well justified were Cervera's apprehensions. But *on paper* it was seemingly formidable. Once at sea, in the days before wireless telegraphy, its movements could not be traced and where it might strike none could tell.

The fleet, in fact, which Spain assembled at the Cape Verde Islands before the declaration of war consisted of the armored cruisers "Cristobal Colon," "Vizcaya," "Infanta Maria Teresa" and "Almirante Oquendo" and three torpedo boat destroyers, "Furor," "Terror," and "Pinton," two torpedo boats and two colliers. It was reported that the battleship "Pelayo" and the armored cruiser "Carlos V." were to be added to this fleet, in which event it would have been more than a match for either of the two fleets into which the American naval force in the Atlantic had been divided. But how far it was from being fit for the struggle is accurately indicated by letters from Cervera written just before the war in which he said:

My fears are realized. The conflict is coming fast upon us; and the "Colon" has not received her big guns; the "Carlos V" has not been delivered, and her 10-cm. artillery is not yet mounted; the "Pelayo" is not ready, for want of finishing her redoubt, and I

believe, her secondary battery; the "Victoria" has no artillery, and of the "Numancia" we had better not speak. . . .

You talk about plans, and, in spite of all my efforts to have some laid out, as it was prudent, my desires have been disappointed. How can it be said that I have been supplied with everything I ask for? The "Colon" has not yet her big guns, and I asked for the bad ones if there were no others. The 14-cm. ammunition, with the exception of about three hundred shots, is bad. The defective guns of the "Vizcaya" and "Oquendo" have not been changed. The cartridge-cases of the "Colon" cannot be recharged. We have not a single Bustamente torpedo. There is no plan or concert, which I so much desired and called for so often. The repairs of the servomotors of the "Infanta Maria Teresa" and the "Vizcaya" were only made after they had left Spain. . . . The "Vizcaya" can no longer steam, and she is only a boil in the body of the fleet.

But what Cervera knew was unknown to the American navy or to the people of the United States, and when on April 29th the Spanish fleet disappeared from the harbor of St. Vincent in the Cape Verde Islands there was wide perplexity as to the point at which he would strike. But by a simple process of reasoning the naval experts figured that Cervera would run for some Spanish port in the West Indies. By the time he could reach our coast his coal would be too nearly exhausted for him to risk a battle—for the modern man-of-war is more restricted in its cruising area than the old-time sailing line-of-battle ship that could keep the sea for a year touching only for water. Of Cuban ports the naval experts eliminated Havana because there Cervera would be within ninety miles of the American naval base and exposed to a superior force. Once in the harbor he could easily be blockaded and would cease to be a factor in the war. San Juan, in Porto Rico, and Cienfuegos and Santiago on the southern coast of Cuba were finally settled upon as the probable ports of refuge for the Spaniards with the chances largely in favor of the latter. How accurately the naval strategists gauged the tactics of the enemy was curiously shown by a book written after the war by Captain



BOMBARDMENT OF SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO, MAY 13, 1898

Concas of the "Infanta Maria Teresa," and Cervera's chief of staff.

"The only harbors," he writes, "which we could enter, were: First, San Juan, which we had to discard altogether, because, as the United States admiral has said, with good reason, he could have taken it whenever he pleased. Second, Havana, which we supposed to be well guarded, and it was indeed, since the Americans have since said that it was considered highly improbable that we should attempt to enter Havana, and it must be understood that it was better guarded by the squadrons at a distance than those near by, because, in spite of the blockade, it would have been difficult to prevent ships, whether injured or not, from placing themselves under the protection of the batteries of the city, while an encounter at a distance from Havana meant the total destruction of our squadron. Third, Cienfuegos, which we also supposed guarded, especially since our squadron having been sighted from the southward, it was from here that our passage to Havana could be most effectually cut off; moreover, this harbor, situated at the head of Cazones Bay, is a veritable rat-trap, very easy to blockade, and from which escape is more difficult than from any other harbor of the island. We knew there were torpedoes there, but no fortifications to amount to anything, and, moreover, the entrance is very difficult to defend against a serious attack from the sea.

"On the other hand, we were twelve hundred and fifty miles distant from the latter harbor, while from Havana, or Dry Tortugas, and Key West, the enemy's base of operations, they had to make a run of only five hundred miles to cut us off. For this reason, Cienfuegos harbor was not seriously considered by us at that time. Later, when starvation stared us in the face at Santiago de Cuba, the former harbor was thought

of as a possible solution, but not on the day of our arrival at Martinique.

"There remained as the only solution going to Santiago de Cuba, the second capital of the island, which we had to suppose, and did suppose, well supplied with provisions and artillery in view of the favorable conditions of the harbor entrance. Moreover, the southern coast of the island offered chances of sortie on stormy days and an open sea for operations, after we had refitted and made repairs. But as we also supposed that the fortifications there were not sufficient to afford us much support in the sortie, it was not at that time decided to go to said harbor in the hopes of a solution which would permit us to force our way into Havana harbor. The distance from Martinique to Santiago is about nine hundred and fifty miles, so that the hostile squadron, which was at San Juan, could easily have arrived there ahead of us. But we never believed that it would do so, thinking that Admiral Sampson—though it has since come to light that he did not know of our arrival—would do what he actually did, namely, cover the remotest possibility, the entrance to the only fortified point, Havana."

But ignorant of the Spanish tactical plans and even of the present whereabouts of the enemy, the United States fleet could only search the high seas with swift scouts, and peer curiously into suspected harbors. To the latter end Admiral Sampson with two battleships, two monitors, and three cruisers was ordered to San Juan to engage the batteries there and discover whether Cervera had slipped into the harbor. It was a futile expedition—the monitors, capable of only eight knots an hour, had to be towed, delaying the progress of the fleet and every now and then breaking loose to the positive danger of the ship towing them. When the forts were being bombarded the news reached Wash-

ington that Cervera was at Curaçao, off the coast of Venezuela, but of this Sampson could get no word. After bombarding the forts with the result of silencing, but not demolishing them, he satisfied himself there were no warships in the harbor and set out on the weary return to Key West. There they found inspiring news and new company. Cervera had been sighted and was now in Caribbean waters. Freed from the apprehension of any attack on the North Atlantic coast the "flying squadron" under Commodore Winfield Scott Schley had been ordered from Hampton Roads and was then at Key West. The quarry had been sighted and the pack of dogs of war intent on its capture had been doubled.

With this largely increased force under his command Sampson at once began the search for Cervera. The "St. Paul," a converted liner and the fastest ship in the squadron, was sent out to scout on the south coast of Cuba, whither too went Schley with the "Brooklyn," "Massachusetts," "Texas," and "Iowa." Sampson himself with the "New York," "Indiana," the monitors "Puritan," "Miantonomah" and "Amphitrite," and the cruisers "Montgomery," "Detroit" and "Cincinnati" went to mount guard in St. Nicholas channel. But while the two fleets were preparing to leave Key West Cervera came up from the southward and slipped into the harbor at Santiago, there to lie snugly concealed behind the hills while the high seas were being ransacked in the search for him.

Out of Commodore Schley's cruise along the south shore of Cuba before the enemy was finally located grew one of the hottest controversies that ever racked the navy with dissension. History will forget it, remembering only that it was Schley who finally and definitely located Cervera in Santiago, that he was the ranking officer in the battle which ended in the destruction of

the Spanish fleet, and that the one man killed on the American side in that historic action stood within speaking distance of Schley on the bridge of the "Brooklyn." But the charge was freely made that throughout the search for Cervera the commodore showed vacillation and indecision and it is but the record of history that the naval authorities at Washington and a great number of officers on the fleet believed it well founded.

The first orders sent by Sampson to Schley directed him to blockade Cienfuegos. A day later another order was sent—he had in the meantime gone far on his voyage—ordering that unless he found the enemy in Cienfuegos, he should leave one light vessel there to blockade and proceed with his remaining ships to Santiago where the Spaniards would probably be found. It took three days for Schley to satisfy himself that the Spaniards were not at the first port, which, like many Cuban harbors, was landlocked with high hills, preventing any view of the city's front. But most of the men on the American fleet thought that the foe was within. A correspondent on the "Texas" reported that from the lookout perch on that ship he saw a gray funnel and several masts rising above the screen of hills. Schley himself saw great quantities of smoke, in the harbor and, before reaching it, heard firing that suggested salutes to the arriving Spanish ships. But in time communication was established with friendly Cubans on shore who reported no warships within. Immediately the fleet started for Santiago. About thirty miles from that port it met the scouts "Minneapolis," "St. Paul" and "Yale," the captains of which were firm in the belief that the Spaniards were there, though none had seen them. Then followed the error of judgment that cost Schley dear in the confidence and estimation of members of his profession. Instead of continuing on to Santiago, establishing the blockade as ordered, and

determining accurately if the enemy was there, he signalled the fleet to return to Key West. His explanation was that certain of the ships needed coal and that the weather was too rough to load from colliers in the open sea. But before he could carry his purpose into effect peremptory orders from the Department sent him back to Santiago, where within an hour of its arrival the little gunboat "Marblehead" steamed to the mouth of the harbor and clearly made out the Spanish fleet within. "Some of us," wrote Captain Evans of the "Iowa," "remembering the fate of Admiral Byng, felt that if Cervera was really in Santiago, and got one of his ships away and on to the coast of the United States while we were tinkering at the machinery of a collier, the world might be startled by another dreadful court martial sentence."

Convinced of the presence of the enemy Schley began the blockade. At the very outset there was an admirable chance to destroy the "Christobal Colon," Cervera's heaviest ship, but no advantage was taken of it. The Spanish battleship lay anchored right athwart the entrance to the harbor, under the guns of the fort indeed, but in such a position that the guns of the entire American fleet could be concentrated on her. It is true that Schley's orders were to blockade, not to give battle, but so enticing a chance to annihilate an enemy's battleship could surely have justified acting beyond orders. But two days after his arrival the commodore ordered the fleet to steam in within seven thousand yards—practically four miles—and open fire on the "Colon." The bombardment was continued for fifty-five minutes without injury to either side, though the forts responded with spirit to the American fire. Here again Schley has been criticized by officers of his fleet for not coming to closer quarters with the "Colon" when she was alone against three of our vessels, two

of them being her superiors. But it is fair to recall that the strength of the batteries had not yet been developed and that every order from the Navy Department had laid stress upon the injunction that the safety of our battleships must not be imperilled. The day before this skirmish Sampson had asked Washington to order him to Santiago, where, as he said, he could maintain the blockade indefinitely. On June 1st he arrived at the scene with the flagship "New York," the battleship "Oregon," and the converted yacht "Mayflower." Day by day thereafter the blockading squadron was increased until the Spaniards were securely "bottled up" by a force vastly their superior.

Before touching upon the story of the blockade, a few words about one of the vessels that figured in it, and in the battle ending it, will be worth while. The battleship "Oregon" of twelve thousand tons displacement, was in San Francisco when war became certain. Clearly she was needed on the Atlantic coast and, nearly a month before the declaration of war she started on a race of fourteen thousand, seven hundred miles, around the tempestuous Cape Horn, to the scene of probable battle. It was a feat such as no battleship had ever before attempted, and it was accomplished with complete success. If it was outdone by the later voyage of sixteen United States battleships around the world, let us remember that the "Oregon" was the first of heavy armored vessels to undertake such a voyage, that it was made under racing speed, and in time of war when constant vigilance was necessary. There was the possibility of encountering the Spanish fleet off Brazil, and at various points hostile torpedo boats were reported. The ship was ready for action at every moment after reaching the Atlantic, while during the passage through the turbulent and tortuous Strait of Magellan there was constant apprehension lest some torpedo

boat lurking in one of the many bays and inlets let slip her deadly projectile—the one almost certain menace to a battleship. It appeared after the war that the Spanish authorities had no knowledge of the coming of the “Oregon,” and it was further shown that the state of Cervera’s fleet was such that the United States ship would have been a match for all of the enemy at once. But Captain Clark knew nothing of these facts. The sixty-eight days of his voyage were a constant strain upon him from which he suffered a permanent nervous breakdown. How stoutly the ship was built and how well handled was shown by the fact that after her more than two months of racing she went directly to the front and into battle without a day in a drydock, or an hour lost in repairs.

This then was the battleship that the arrival of Sampson added to the blockading fleet at Santiago. With the “Oregon” the United States force was vastly superior to that of Cervera even had the Spanish vessels been in condition for effective service, which most emphatically they were not. With Sampson’s arrival the blockade became stricter. Instead of lying some ten miles out at sea the ships lay so close in shore that the Spanish sentries could hear the cries of the sentries aboard. After the war Cervera wrote of this blockade:

It was absolutely impossible to go out at night, he wrote, “because in this narrow channel, illuminated by a dazzling light, we could not have followed the channel and would have lost the ships, some by running aground, others by colliding with their own companions. But, even supposing that we had succeeded in going out, before the first ship was outside we should have been seen and covered from the very first with the concentrated fire of the whole squadron.”

When the blockade was perfected it was maintained upon the following plan: The fleet was divided into two squadrons with Sampson in supreme command and Schley directing one. The latter squadron was

made up of the "Brooklyn," "Massachusetts," "Texas," "Marblehead," and "Vixen"; the other of the "New York," "Iowa," "Oregon," "New Orleans," "Mayflower," and "Porter." The ships lay in an arc of a circle of which Morro Castle formed the centre. At night they were drawn in to within two miles of the enemy's guns, and by day never more than four miles in the offing. At night too they were reinforced by numbers of launches, dispatch boats, and small gunboats that plied continually back and forth before the harbor's mouth watching lest a torpedo boat should slip out in the darkness. But there was not much darkness permitted. The searchlights were at all times glaring upon the entrance to the harbor. Their steady glare dazzled the sentinels and gunners in the forts and would have made it impossible for any pilot to bring a vessel out through the narrow and tortuous channel. As the days wore by Admiral Sampson sent his heavy ships even closer inboard at night. Captain Evans, in command of the "Iowa," tells in his book, "The Sailor's Log," the story of this service and of the strain which it imposed upon those performing it:

The plan of using searchlights was perfectly carried out and originated, no doubt, with Sampson himself. I was the first one to carry out his orders in this respect, and I shall never forget my sensations as I did it. The "Iowa" was well in toward the land when the "New York" steamed in near me and the admiral hailed and said: "At dark, I wish you to go in and turn a searchlight on the channel." "How near shall I go, sir?" I replied. "Go in until you can detect a small boat crossing in front of the Punta Gorda battery," came back through the megaphone. "How long shall I remain there, sir?" I asked. "All night, sir." "Ay, ay, sir." The admiral certainly had given me a new sensation. The idea of deliberately placing a battleship within a mile or two of the fastest torpedo boats in the world, and then turning on a searchlight to mark her position, was novel at least. All writers on the subject had advised sending such valuable ships to sea at night to keep the torpedo boats away from them; but Sampson had thought rapidly

and accurately, and had gauged the features of this special case most admirably, as the result showed.

At dark that night I steamed the "Iowa" in for this new duty, and, when I reached what I supposed to be the proper position, turned on the searchlight and stopped the engines. All hands were at quarters, guns loaded, and everything ready to return the fire I felt sure would be opened on us. As the ship lost way and came to a standstill in the water, I examined carefully the channel with my glasses and concluded that I was not yet near enough to insure the work I was ordered to do. I therefore shut off the light and again steamed in, and when I stopped the second time, the beam of the searchlight showed up everything very distinctly. The sentries on the Morro could be seen plainly as they pulled their hats down over their eyes as a protection against the glare. The infantry fired spitefully with their Mausers without doing any harm, but the batteries remained silent, which has always been a great surprise and puzzle to all of us. They could have shot the searchlight out of us without doubt if they knew the first principles of pointing guns. Maybe they knew there were a lot of searchlights in that fleet and it would be a hard job to put them all out.

After the first night, three battleships—the "Iowa," "Oregon," and "Massachusetts"—were detailed to do searchlight duty, and there was never a minute at night, until the Spanish fleet was destroyed, when the channel was not so lighted that it was impossible for anything to move on the water without being seen. The duty was well done, and only those who did it know how hard it was or how great the strain. As a rule the darkness was intense, and between the battleships and the shore were guard boats and picket launches which would be endangered if their position were disclosed, and as a consequence the beam of the searchlight had to be accurately held on the channel. To do this when the heavy swell and the strong tide were cutting the ship about was more difficult than the average person would imagine. It was beautiful to see the accuracy with which these great ships were handled as they came in or went out of position with twenty-five or thirty vessels crowded about them and not a light on any of them. During all the time we were there the paint was not even scratched on one of them by collision.

It may be noted in passing that there was as little desire on the part of the Spaniards to leave the harbor, as there was on that of their watchers to free them. Admiral Cervera, on being asked by the Governor-General of Cuba what would be the probable result of a sortie, wrote:

I, who am a man without ambitions, without mad passions, believe that whatever is most expedient should be done, and I state most emphatically that I shall *never* be the one to decree the horrible and useless hecatomb which will be the only possible result of the sortie from here by main force, for I should consider myself responsible before God and history for the lives sacrificed on the altar of vanity, and not in the true defence of the country.

But while it was the opinion of the navy that a concerted attempt on the part of the whole Spanish fleet to escape would result in its destruction, there was always danger that one vessel might slip out at night or in thick weather and ravage some section of the United States coast. To avert this it was determined to block the channel by sinking a useless vessel in it. The ship chosen was the collier "Merrimac," one of those worthless ships that thrifty patriots sold the United States for twice their value, and a young naval constructor, Lieutenant Richmond Pearson Hobson, was detailed to prepare her for the sacrifice. The job was done speedily and Hobson, who had placed the torpedoes that were to send the hulk to the bottom, pleaded so hard for permission to take her into the harbor himself, though not a line officer, that Sampson acquiesced. Six volunteers were called for from the fleet. Some six hundred responded. Seven in fact accompanied Hobson, for one man secreted himself on the "Merrimac" only appearing when it was too late to be sent back to the fleet. It was no light errand on which these men were bent. To make the blocking of the channel effective they must take their craft past the batteries, through the hail of Mauser bullets and into a field of mines. They must explode their own torpedoes, sink the ship beneath their feet, and escape from a bullet swept sea by swimming or in rafts. But all went cheerfully, even gaily.

It was just before daybreak on the 3rd of June that the "Merrimac" put forth, followed by a launch

commanded by Ensign J. W. Powell to pick up the survivors. Scarcely was the first battery within range when the flood of fire and hail of missiles began. The ship was hit repeatedly, but the men lying flat on the deck escaped hurt. When the desired point was reached effort was made to touch off the torpedoes that hung along her sides, but the electrical connections had been cut by the enemy's shells and only three exploded, a fact fatal to the complete success of the enterprise for the ship, instead of sinking with a plunge, went down but slowly and was swung by the tide to one side of the channel she was intended to block. Hobson thus describes what followed:

We were all aft, lying on the deck. Shells and bullets whistled around. Six-inch shells from the "Vizcaya" came tearing into the "Merrimac," crashing clear through, while the plunging shots from the fort broke through her decks.

"Not a man must move," I said; and it was only owing to the splendid discipline of the men that we all were not killed. We must lie there till daylight, I told them. Now and again one or the other of the men lying with his face glued to the deck and wondering whether the next shell would not come our way, would say, "Hadn't we better drop off now, sir?" but I said, "Wait till daylight." It would have been impossible to get the catamaran anywhere but on to the shore, where the soldiers stood shooting, and I hoped that by daylight we might be recognized and saved.

It was splendid the way those men behaved. The fire of the soldiers, the batteries, and the "Vizcaya" was awful. When the water came up on the "Merrimac's" decks the catamaran floated amid the wreckage, but she was still made fast to the boom, and we caught hold of the edges and clung on, our heads only being above water.

Shortly after daybreak the adventurers were captured by Admiral Cervera himself, who had come out in a launch to view the wreck. They were sent to Morro Castle while Cervera, who throughout his unfortunate career acted the chivalrous Spanish gentleman, dispatched an aide to notify Admiral Sampson that his men were safe.

Gallant as was the dash of Hobson into the harbor it failed of its purpose. The channel was still open and there was no possibility for the fleet to relax its vigilance. Sampson thereupon determined to bombard the forts, not with much hope of reducing them, but rather to determine their power, and perhaps injure them so a battleship might safely lie nearer inshore.

But here again the result was virtual failure. Though the fleet attacked with great gallantry—the range at times being only eighteen hundred yards—no permanent injury was done the forts. They were silenced for a time indeed, but the next day were as formidable as ever. Had the army been present to coöperate with an attack on the landward side the story might have been different, but at this time our troops had not made a foothold on the island. Still the fire from the ships impressed the Spaniards with the power of the force confronting them and Sampson notes that after the bombardment not a shot was fired from the forts until the day when the unfortunate Cervera made his dash for freedom and met annihilation.

The story of the events occurring between the date of this bombardment, June 6th, and that of the battle of Santiago, July 3rd, must be passed over hastily. On the 11th a large expeditionary force of marines who had been landed at Guantanamo were attacked by a superior force of Spaniards and in the fighting that followed lost six men.

It is a curious fact that in two battles on that date, the other being the fight of the torpedo boat "Winslow" at Cardenas, more men of the navy were lost than in all the other operations of the war afloat. The camp established by the marines was so perfect in sanitation and the care of the men so scientific that not one was lost by sickness to the end of the war—a striking fact when compared with the mortality in the camps

established by the army when it took the field in Cuba. It was on the 21st that the army transports convoyed by naval guards brought some seventeen thousand troops to the little landing place at Siboney, east of Santiago. The voyage from Port Tampa had been uneventful, but full of apprehension. A mysterious fleet of four Spanish vessels, not identified to this day and which came to be known derisively as the "Spook fleet," had been reported as hovering in Cuban waters. A mere torpedo boat could have sent several of the crowded transports to the bottom, but American luck held and the invading force was landed in safety. Vigorous assaults were made by the navy at various points along the coast to divert the Spaniards' attention and in one of these the "Texas" was hit by two shells that penetrated her unarmored portions and did more damage than was sustained by any of our men-of-war during the struggle.

It is no part of the plan of this work to detail the operations of the army about Santiago. There were hard fighting, heavy loss, and conspicuous illustrations of individual gallantry. Unhappily there was also conspicuous weakness in generalship. When Cervera made his dash from the harbor our troops on the surrounding hills were fought to a standstill, and General Shafter in dispatches to Washington was hinting at the need of falling back and relinquishing the ground he had won. From the very first there had been a misunderstanding between the commanders of the land and sea forces. Cervera's fleet was what we were after, not the town of Santiago, which was of no strategical importance. But the navy could not get at Cervera, except by running through a narrow channel, heavily mined and commanded by land batteries. If those fortresses were captured by a land force—repeated efforts to destroy them from the sea having failed—the

lighter vessels could have cleared the channel and the battleships have entered to give battle to the enemy. But until the mines were gone the Administration at Washington refused, because of the threatening attitude of Europe, to imperil one battleship. It was therefore determined that Shafter should move his troops along the seafront and attack the forts. For some reason, never explained, he abandoned this plan, advanced into the interior, and finally placed his army where it could neither serve nor be served by the navy. Yet until the final catastrophe to the Spanish fleet Shafter was continually appealing to Washington and to Sampson direct that all perils be braved and the harbor forced. The day before the end the admiral wrote in response to one of these appeals, speaking of the forts:

They cannot even prevent our entrance. Our trouble from the first has been that the channel to the harbor is well strewn with observation mines which would certainly result in the sinking of one or more of ships if we attempted to enter the harbor, and by the sinking of a ship the object of the attempt to enter the harbor would be defeated by the preventing of further progress on our part. It was my hope that an attack on your part of these shore batteries from the rear would leave us at liberty to drag the channel for torpedoes.

But, "American luck," which had served so well so many times, as for example when at Caimanera the "Texas" picked up a contact mine with her propeller, and the "Marblehead" struck two more and none of the three exploded, though any one should have destroyed the ship touching it, turned even this dissension between the army and the navy into good fortune. For on the morning of July 3rd, Admiral Sampson concluding that his endeavors to persuade Shafter to attack the forts rather than the city could only be made effective by a personal interview, hoisted at the fore of the flagship the signal, "Disregard the movements of

the commander-in-chief" and thereupon started for Siboney. The day before Admiral Cervera had been peremptorily ordered to take his fleet out of Santiago harbor. He had protested bitterly. The vessels were in no condition, as was shown in the action that followed, for either a run at sea or a battle. But Governor-General Blanco insisted that they should undertake the flight and brave its perils. A cable message from Madrid—over the only cable left uncut—upheld Blanco in his orders. Within a few days the flight would have been attempted. But when the watchers on the hills at the harbor's mouth saw one of the American ships, and that the only one supposed to be swift enough to cope with the "Christobal Colon," making off to the eastward, Cervera determined to take advantage of her absence and make his dash for liberty.

It was a bright Sunday morning—curiously enough both of the great naval battles of the Spanish War were fought on Sunday—and the crews of the ships lying off the mouth of the harbor were mustered on the decks for the weekly inspection. This did not mean that there was any let up in the vigilance with which the harbor's mouth was being watched. From fighting top and from bridge glasses were riveted on the narrow channel through which the enemy must emerge if it should dare to seek battle. The vessels were in their ordinary condition, forming an arc of a circle about eight miles long. Steam was low in all of them, save one, the "Oregon." There was some suspicion that something might happen that day, for smoke had been seen over the hills that masked the harbor as though the Spaniards were getting up steam. But the watchers had waited so long that they had almost given up hope.

Nevertheless they were ready for whatever might happen. On every ship the flags that would announce

the appearance of the enemy were set aside ready to display, and on the "Texas" they were actually bent to the halliards with a man standing on guard ready to hoist them at the first moment. On the "Oregon" was a jacky standing by a loaded six-pounder ready to fire the first shot. Every ship in the squadron was eager to signal first the appearance of the foe. So nearly did all at once catch sight of the dark gray bow of a Spanish cruiser moving out from behind the hills of Smith Cay that the "250" signal, meaning, "The enemy is escaping," broke out simultaneously from the foremast of every ship and the "Oregon's" gun boomed out just as the electric gongs and the bugles on all the ships were calling the men to quarters. Throwing their spotless white Sunday clothes in every direction, stripping to the waist as they dashed for their places in turrets and barbettes, to the fighting top, fifty feet above the water, and the bowels of the ship, twenty feet below it, the men dashed madly for their stations, cheering the while as they faced at last the opportunity for action which they had awaited for long weary weeks. While the honors seem equally divided as to which ship first indicated the appearance of the enemy, the "Iowa," under command of one of America's most popular naval heroes, Captain Robley D. Evans, was first to fire on the enemy. Captain Evans himself tells the story of the action in his admirable book, some portions of which may be quoted:

As the leading Spanish ship, the flagship "Maria Teresa," swung into the channel leading out from the Punta Gorda, she presented a magnificent appearance with her splendid new battle flags and her polished brass work. Her bright new coat of paint was in marked contrast to the lead-colored, iron-rusted ships that were rushing full speed at her. As she passed the Diamond Shoal at the entrance to the harbor she swung off to the westward and opened fire smartly with her port broadside and turret guns. From this moment the battle may be said to have been on, and the roaring of the guns

was incessant. The "Vizcaya" came second, about six hundred yards astern of the flagship, followed by the "Colon" and then the "Oquendo" bringing up the rear; the torpedo boats "Furor" and "Pluton" were not yet in sight. The speed I judged to be about eight knots as the ships came down the channel, which was increased to thirteen or more as they kept away to the westward in the open sea. They came at us like mad bulls, and presented a fine appearance as I caught sight of them occasionally through the dense smoke of our battery.

It had been my intention from the first to ram or torpedo the flagship if I could reach her, and to insure this, I remained, as much as I could, in the conning tower at the side of the quartermaster, who was steering, watching carefully every move of the wheel and directing the man just where to head. I kept the "Maria Teresa" open on my starboard bow, so that the guns could have a chance at her, until it became evident that I could not ram her or even get within torpedo range, when I swung off to port, gave her the full benefit of my starboard broadside, and then swung back quickly and headed across the bows of the second ship, hoping to be able to reach her with my ram. The "Maria Teresa" passed me at a distance of about twenty-six hundred yards, and, as she crossed my bows, our forward twelve-inch guns were fired, and I was confident that I saw both shells strike the Spanish ship. As I flung back for the second ship, my port battery opened on the "Maria Teresa" and the starboard guns continued to play on the "Vizcaya" and "Colon," which were approaching us at great speed. The fire of the first ship had been very rapid and accurate when she opened, but it grew ragged and inaccurate as the range decreased. I soon found that the "Vizcaya" would also pass ahead of me, and that I could not reach her with ram or torpedo. I accordingly swung to port, gave her my broadside, and, as she passed at nineteen hundred yards, put my helm to port and headed in again to try for the next ship.

At this time the "Colon" came with a great show of speed, passing between the leading ships and the shore and much protected by their smoke. As she passed she struck me twice—two as beautiful shots as I ever saw made by any ship. I had been doing my best to fight the "Iowa" from the conning tower, but the temptation to see the fight was more than I could resist, and I frequently found myself on the bridge, deeply interested in the magnificent spectacle about me. It thus happened that I was on the end of the bridge when the "Colon" paid her respects to us. The first shell she fired at us, through a rent in the smoke, struck on the starboard side a little forward of the bridge, about four feet above the water line, passed through the cellulose belt, and exploded on the berth deck, demolishing the dispensary, breaking almost every medicine bottle in it, and doing great damage otherwise. The smells that came up in consequence of this explosion were variegated and intense, a mixture

of medicine and melinite. The second shell, of the same size as the first—about six and a half inches in diameter—struck just at the water line and about six to ten feet farther forward, passed through the side and into the cellulose belt, where it broke up without exploding. It, however, made an ugly, jagged hole, eighteen inches long and eight inches wide, through which the water poured with great rapidity. The cellulose in the coffer dam, which was supposed to swell up and stop the shot hole, washed out and floated astern in a broad, brown streak. I think the "Colon" fired only twice at me, and, as I have stated, she did excellent shooting as far as I could see.

When the "Oquendo" approached me, I found that if I held on my course she would pass ahead of me, so I changed and ran parallel with her at a distance of about sixteen to fourteen hundred yards and opened on her my entire battery, including the rapid-fire and machine guns. At this time she was under the concentrated fire of several of our ships and the effect was most destructive. She rolled and staggered like a drunken thing, and finally seemed to stop her engines. I thought she was going to strike her colors, and was on the point of ordering the battery to cease firing, when she started ahead again and we redoubled our efforts to sink her. As I looked at her I could see the shot holes come in her sides and our shells explode inside of her, but she pluckily held on her course and fairly smothered us with a shower of shells and machine-gun shots.

In the meantime the Spanish flagship headed for the shore, in flames, fore and aft, and soon took the ground about seven miles to the west of the entrance to Santiago Harbor, and a few minutes later the "Oquendo" followed her, the flames bursting out through the shot holes in her sides and leaping up from the deck as high as the military tops. It was a magnificent, sad sight to see these beautiful ships in their death agonies; but we were doing the work we had been educated for, and we cheered and yelled until our throats were sore.

When we were hotly engaged with the last ship, two dense spots of black smoke and two long white streaks on the water indicated the position of the Spanish torpedo boats as they made their gallant dash for liberty. We turned our rapid-fire guns and the after guns of the main battery on them, and at the same time other ships concentrated on the little gamecocks. In a very short time—not more than five minutes, I should say—a splendid column of steam mixed with coal dust sprang hundreds of feet in the air, and I knew that the boiler of one of them had blown up. A few minutes later the second one blew up, and the torpedo boats that had caused so much worry to friends and foes alike were things of the past. They had given us many sleepless nights, but when it came to the test of battle they had done just what many of us thought they would do. They had been disabled and destroyed in the shortest

possible time. It was almost wicked to waste the lives of brave men in such an attempt.

About this time the flagship "New York" came racing back to join in the fight. As she passed the batteries they concentrated a heavy fire on her, to which she paid no attention, but fired three shots at one of the Spanish torpedo boats and then hurried on, coming up directly astern of the "Iowa." She had the "Vizcaya" within range of her eight-inch guns for some time before that vessel ran ashore, but in order to hit her, would have had to fire over the "Iowa" which I suppose was the reason why Captain Chadwick held his fire. Afterward, when she passed between me and the wreck of the "Vizcaya," as I was hoisting out my boats to go to her relief, my men broke into cheers as they made out Admiral Sampson on the bridge.

The course of the "Iowa" had carried her inside of the rest of the American fleet, and, as I drew up abreast of the two burning Spanish ships, on the beach, I could see their crews struggling in the water where the shells of our ships seemed to be bursting among them. The "Maria Teresa" had a white flag flying forward, which I was sure could not be seen by the vessels firing on them, so I hoisted the signal, "Enemy's ships have surrendered!" and the fire was at once concentrated on the fleeing "Vizcaya." She was soon on fire, and off Accerraderos turned and headed for the shore, smoke and flames pouring from her ports and hatches. The "Colon," the last ship of the splendid squadron, was standing to the westward, hotly pursued by the "Oregon," "Brooklyn," "Texas," and "New York." All the rest were shapeless wrecks on the Cuban shore, and nearly six hundred of their gallant officers and men had fought their last fight. God and the gunners had had their day." . . .

Presently a boat came alongside bearing Captain Eulaté, commander of the "Vizcaya." That was a sight I shall never forget as long as I live. In the stern, supported by one of our naval cadets, sat the captain, covered with blood from three wounds, with a blood-stained handkerchief about his bare head. Around him sat or lay a dozen or more wounded men. In the bottom of the boat, which was leaking, was a foot or so of blood-stained water and the body of a dead Spanish sailor which rolled from side to side as the water swashed about. The captain was tenderly placed in a chair and then hoisted to the deck, where he was received with the honors due his rank. As the chair was placed on the quarter-deck he slowly raised himself to his feet, unbuckled his sword-belt, kissed the hilt of his sword, and, bowing low, gracefully presented it to me as a token of surrender. I never felt so sorry for a man in all my life. Of course I declined to receive the sword, or rather I instantly handed it back to Captain Eulaté, but accepted the surrender of his officers and men in the name of Admiral Sampson, our

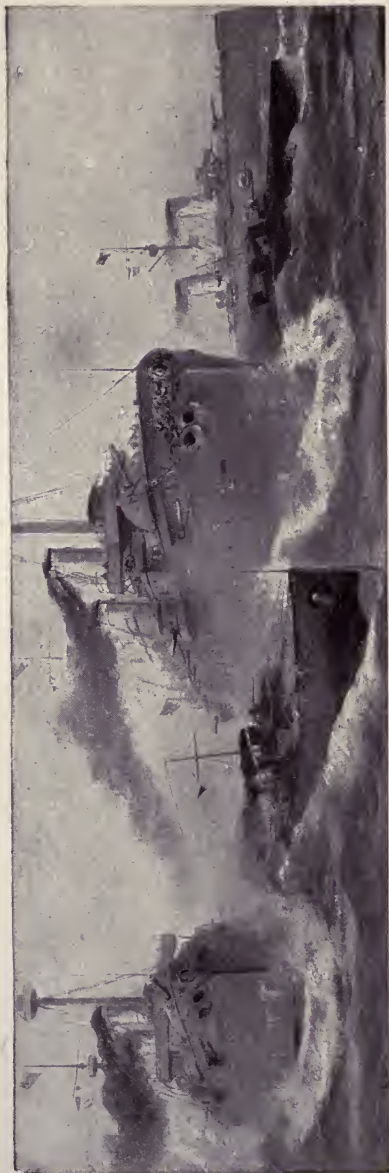
commander in chief. My men were all crowded aft about the deck and superstructure, and when I declined the sword the brave hearts under the blue shirts appreciated my feelings and they cheered until I felt ashamed of myself.

As I supported the captain toward my cabin, he stopped for a moment just as we reached the hatch, and drawing himself up to his full height, with his right arm extended above his head, exclaimed "Adios, Vizcaya!" Just as the words passed his lips the forward magazine of his late command, as if arranged for the purpose, exploded with magnificent effect. Captain Eulaté, a sensitive, passionate man, conducted himself in a way to elicit the admiration of all who saw him. After he had been attended to by the surgeons he occupied a part of my cabin, and did all in his power to aid me in making his officers and men comfortable.

The experience of the "Iowa" so picturesquely related by its commander was in all essentials that of the other vessels of the fleet. All were in action, save only the luckless "New York," which came up with the fleeing enemy in time only to fire two shots. One ship which astonished all beholders was the "Texas." She had been thought to be the weakest and the slowest of the American vessels, but she got into the battle early and kept well up with the enemy. Captain Philip, her commander, notes that the two big shells which found their way into the Spanish vessels were twelve-inch shells which were necessarily from the guns of the "Texas," as she alone was armed with cannon of that calibre. The "Brooklyn," under command of Commodore Schley, was, because of her position on the blockade, and because of her superior speed, the foremost in the race. On this vessel was killed the only man lost on the American side during the action, her chief yeoman, Ellis, who was standing on the bridge within touching distance of the commodore when a shell took off his head. During the course of the action Commodore Schley ordered the helm of the "Brooklyn" to be put to port, making a "loop" which temporarily took him away from the Spanish line, but



ADMIRAL SAMPSON'S FLEET OFF PUERTO RICO, IN SEARCH OF CERVERA'S VESSELS, MAY 1, 1898



ADMIRAL CERVERA'S FLEET APPROACHING SANTIAGO, MAY, 1898

ultimately secured for him a superior position. With all the ships blanketed in smoke, for this was prior to the days of smokeless powder, this manœuvre almost resulted in a collision between the "Brooklyn" and the "Texas," and did result in later and very bitter attacks upon Schley. The movement was condemned by a court of inquiry, but with the dissent of its president, Admiral George Dewey.

First of the enemy's ships to meet destruction was the "Maria Teresa." She headed the enemy's line as it steamed out of the harbor, and as she turned westward the guns of our entire squadron were brought to bear on her. The American shooting was murderously accurate, and the range scarcely over one mile. It was but three-quarters of an hour after the "Maria Teresa" appeared when she was driven upon the rocks with flames gushing from every port, her ammunition exploding and her people facing the alternative of death by fire or by drowning. Just then the "Texas" passed in swift pursuit of the others. Her men naturally began to cheer as they saw the plight of the enemy, but Captain Philip from the bridge shouted to all that might hear, "Don't cheer, men, those poor devils are dying." The phrase goes well with the last words of Captain Evans's report of the battle, written while his crew were rescuing and caring for the Spanish wounded. "I cannot express my admiration for my magnificent crew. So long as the enemy showed his flag they fought like American seamen, but when the flag came down they were as gentle and tender as American women."

Smallest of all the American vessels was the little "Gloucester," formerly the pleasure boat of a Newport millionaire. Her commander, Lieutenant Wainwright, had been on a man-of-war in the harbor of Havana for two months after the sinking of the "Maine," and grimly declared he would never set his foot on

shore until he could go with an armed force to take possession of the city. Now at Santiago he marked as his special prey the two torpedo boat destroyers, and as soon as they appeared rushed at them with his little unarmored boat and a rapid fire of his puny guns. On all hands his was declared to be the most reckless daring of the entire action. But he got his prey. The "Pluton" was driven ashore burning and utterly destroyed by an explosion; the "Furor" was broken in two by the American fire, receiving some heavy shots from the big guns of the larger vessels as they passed. With these wasps of the sea destroyed there was no need for further fighting on the part of the "Gloucester" and her crew turned their attention to saving life, working as hard at that as they had at destroying it. It was a boat from the "Gloucester" that picked Admiral Cervera from the water as barely a month before he had drawn Lieutenant Hobson to safety.

Swift following upon the end of the "Maria Teresa" the "Oquendo" came into range of the four American battleships and in forty-nine minutes was broken in two and blazing fiercely on the rocks half a mile from her sister ship. Meanwhile the "Vizcaya," the best of the Spanish cruisers, was fleeing fast, but fell before the fire of the "Oregon" and "Brooklyn." Only the "Colon" then remained, and she the fastest of the Spanish ships was slipping along the coast to the westward like a hunted fox. She was the special prey of the "Oregon." It is a matter of history that as the latter ship was rushing through the sea in swift pursuit, saving her fire, one gun was discharged at the quarry. A moment or two afterwards the chief engineer of the "Oregon," grimy with coal dust, came to the deck and said to Captain Clark that his men were exhausted and fainting from the heat and the work of the stoke

hole, but had been so greatly stimulated by the sound of the gun that he hoped a few more shots might be fired to key them up. The "Colon's" flight was hopeless and she too, though but little injured by the American fire, was run ashore.

The battle was over with complete victory for the navy of the United States. It had lasted less than four hours. The first three Spanish ships to be destroyed had ended their career in war in exactly one hour and a half from the time they appeared. Naturally the enthusiasm on the American ships was so great as to baffle all description, though the immediate work of all hands was to man the boats and rescue the defeated enemy. But perhaps the finest scene in that moment of triumph was reported by the war correspondent of the *New York Sun* on the "Texas":

From the "Oregon" came the jubilant strains of "The Star-Spangled Banner." On the bridge of the "Texas" a group of hilarious officers surrounded their commander, Captain Philip, who seemed noticeably reserved and thoughtful. Suddenly he turned to his executive officer, and said quietly: "Call all hands aft!" The five hundred men of the ship trooped to the quarter-deck, which was still snow-white with the saltpeter from the guns, and listened reverently while Captain Philip offered thanks to God for their preservation from the perils of battle. "I want," said the captain, as he stood with bared head, "to make public acknowledgment here that I have complete faith in God, the Father Almighty. I want all of you, officers and crew, unless there be those who have conscientious scruples against so doing, to lift your hats and in your hearts offer silent thanks to God." As the strong tones of the captain's voice died away, every man stood reverently, for a moment or two, with bared and bowed head. Many of the men were much affected. In the eyes of more than one brawny Jacky I saw the glimmer of a moisture that was hastily brushed away. As the men were dispersing, one big fellow called: "Three cheers for our captain!" and they were given with a heartiness that fairly shook the ship.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The End of the War—Its Fruit in Territory and New Problems—
The International March on Pekin—The Battleship Fleet Goes
Around the World—Target Practice at Magdalena Bay—The
New United States Navy and Its Relative Rank—The End.

THE destruction of Cervera's fleet was the virtual end of the war. Though the Spaniards in Santiago held out stubbornly—sending their three-thousand-ton cruiser "Reina Mercedes" to lie on the bed of the channel beside the shattered "Merrimac"—they could only defer for a few days the inevitable result. When the city fell to the army, though in fact it was the work of the navy, done at little cost of human life, which ended its resistance, the backbone of Spanish power was broken. General Miles took Porto Rico without encountering anything more terrifying on the part of the enemy than white flags. On the northern coast of Cuba the Spaniards sacrificed one good three-thousand-ton cruiser, the "Alphonso III.," well built, though of incomplete armament, by sending her out of Havana harbor, where she had hidden since the beginning of the war. Had her guns been aboard she would have been more than a match for the auxiliary vessels that attacked her, but as it was she was driven ashore and burned. Skirmishes of this sort wound up the continuously victorious campaign in the West Indies.

Two rather humorous incidents enlivened the closing weeks of the war. Sorely shattered in sea power as they were, the Spaniards still had a squadron—on paper—at Cadiz under Admiral Camara. As a point of fact these ships were not formidable, but that was known,

only to the officers who manned the unfinished and half-armed vessels. But it was what the navy calls "a fleet in being," and as such was a menace always to be watched. The threat of the Spaniards was to send this fleet through the Suez Canal to overwhelm Dewey at Manila—a practicable enterprise had the vessels been at all in condition. In any event it was a serious enough threat to worry our Navy Department and people. Even before the destruction of Cervera's ships Camara entered the Suez Canal, but was detained there for lack of money to pay canal tolls—a lame beginning for a great expedition of war which aroused the American humorist to his best efforts. Another diverting feature of the Camara dash was the effort of a New York newspaper proprietor to secure a British tramp steamer and sink it in the canal to block the way of the bankrupt armada. Meantime the Navy Department was taking prompt steps to meet the Spanish threat. A considerable squadron was assembled at Hampton Roads and the announcement loudly made that it was designed to attack the forts of Spain which the absence of the Cadiz fleet left unprotected. At the same time from San Francisco the cruiser "Charleston" and the monitors "Monadnock" and "Monterey" were ordered to Manila.

The "Charleston" was first to sail and on the way across the ocean stopped at the desolate island of Guam, then a Spanish province. A pigmy fort near the harbor's mouth was flying the Spanish flag and Captain Glass, commanding, fired two or three shells at it, then went on into the harbor. Hardly had the cruiser dropped anchor when a small boat flying a Spanish flag and bearing a Spanish officer in full uniform came alongside. The guest was received on the quarter-deck by Captain Glass, who fortunately spoke Spanish fluently.

"Captain," said the visitor, "I have come to apologize for not returning your salute."

"My salute?" asked Glass perplexed. "What salute?"

"Why, you did fire a salute as you passed the fort, but our saluting battery is out of order, and we shall have to delay answering until later in the day."

"My dear sir," exclaimed the astonished American, "is it possible you don't know that your country and mine are at war? I fired shells at your fort and am here to demand its surrender and that of the town."

The surrender was promptly completed and the joke seemed to be on the Spaniards, who had not heard of the war. Glass, however, for some time, felt an uneasy consciousness that the gunnery which permitted those shells to impress their target so little was not quite up to the mark. The three vessels in due time reached Manila, though by their arrival the need for them was past—indeed the peace protocol had been signed before the "Monadnock" arrived. The voyage was a cruel one for the men confined below in ships, the low decks of which were almost constantly awash. "The trip through the tropics," wrote the captain of the "Monterey," "was very trying on officers and men. The temperature of the sea water has been eighty-five to eighty-seven degrees; the temperature of the air seventy-five to ninety-five degrees, and with the engines and boilers in use there was no chance for the heat to radiate. Hence the temperatures in the ships have been very high—fireroom from one hundred and ten to one hundred and thirty degrees; engine-room one hundred and ten to one hundred and forty degrees; dynamo-room from one hundred and five to one hundred and thirty degrees; crew space eighty-six to ninety-nine degrees. Men have been overcome in the coal bunkers, fireroom and evaporating-room with heat exhaustion and

the health of the ship's company has been affected by living in such high temperatures."

Before the second monitor had reached Manila the city had yielded to the combined guns of the army and navy; the fleet of Camara had returned from the Red Sea to protect the coasts of Spain from the threatened visit of an American squadron, the peace protocol had been signed, and the war was over.

Thereafter until the date of the writing of this book the work of the navy had been mainly that of peace, and of the development drill so necessary to assure preparedness for war. Not but that there was active service in a way and powder burned in anger.

The spluttering fires of rebellion persisted long in the Philippines where the natives, rudely cheated of their long cherished hopes of absolute independence, kept up for years much the same guerilla resistance to American authority as the Cubans had against Spanish rule. It is probable that our experience after the war led our people to be much more charitable to our fallen foes than they had been before the conflict. We found ourselves obliged to apply to the insurrection many of the harsh methods which the Spaniards had employed.

We entered upon the war explicitly denying any purpose to add to our territory. We emerged from it the owners of Porto Rico, Guam, and the populous Philippines; with Cuba nominally free, but actually under our control and ready to drop into our ownership at any moment. And we have found that Spain, relieved of these incumbrances, has advanced industrially and commercially, while the complete triumph of our arms won for us a burden rather than a benefit; a big bunch of liabilities rather than of assets.

During the period of comparative quiescence in the first decade of the twentieth century the most notable service in which the navy engaged was the expedition

to relieve the legations at Peking. China, always seething with sedition and brimming with bitter hatred of the "foreign devils," was suddenly overwhelmed with an insurrection cunningly planned by a secret society, the I-Ho-Ch'uan, signifying the "Fist of Righteous Harmony." This picturesque designation was too complicated for foreigners, who called the rebels "Boxers." Rebels they were only nominally. Their avowed purpose was to drive all foreigners out of China, and in this they had the secret sympathy of the Empress Dowager, the real despot of the nation. The trade of the United States with the Orient, then reaching thirty-two million dollars a year, was threatened and the lives of more than two thousand Americans resident in China put in jeopardy. The agitation was not directed against Americans alone, but all foreigners, and one of the first to suffer by it was the German minister, Baron von Ketteler, who was fatally stabbed as he was riding in the streets of Peking. Shortly after this the situation became so menacing that the American legation was fortified and twenty-five marines from the "Newark," a company of blue-jackets and two guns, one a Colt's automatic, were sent to the legation for its defence. Presently thereafter marines and blue-jackets were sent to Tientsin. Then international complications set in. Every civilized nation was represented by naval detachments, all wanted to take part in any military movement for the suppression of the rebellion, and each wished to be in the lead. It was left to an American naval officer, Captain McCalla, whose life service has seen as many exciting incidents as that of any one in the navy, to break the bonds of diplomatic intrigue. "If no other nation is willing to march on Peking," said he, "I will lead my force alone." This assertion ended the diplomatic quarrel. No representative of a foreign nation was willing to be unrepresented in the march upon the



CAPTAIN MAHAN

CAPTAIN CROWNINSHIELD

SECRETARY LONG

ADMIRAL SICARD

THE NAVAL BOARD OF STRATEGY; 1898

Chinese capital. In the end the marines and blue-jackets of the United States, Great Britain, Japan, Germany, France, Austria, and Italy joined in the expedition. It was a hard-fighting but futile march. When within forty miles of Peking the invaders discovered that the Imperial forces of China had made common cause with the Boxers, had cut the communications with Tientsin, and the expedition was forced to return. There was plenty of hard fighting, for the enemy, though undisciplined and badly armed, greatly outnumbered the allied forces and fought with the rage and courage born of fanaticism. But Tientsin was reached, the foreign quarters protected, and the native city captured. That accomplished, a new march was made to Peking and the legations were relieved. It was none too soon. Crowded into the compound of the American legation were a multitude of women and children, guarded by a mere handful of fighting men. No truthful word as to their condition had reached the outer world. But a multiplicity of rumors, many fabricated in cold blood by correspondents at Hong Kong, Shanghai, and other points far distant from the scene, stirred not merely the American nation, but all Europe into a frenzied apprehension for the safety of the beleaguered ones. Stories of the most incredible atrocities were current in the press of all civilized nations. The Honorable John D. Long, then Secretary of the Navy, has put it on record that he was the one member of the President's Cabinet who did not believe that the entire colony of diplomats and attachés at Peking had been massacred. Naturally, therefore, when the international expedition after attaining a point within forty miles of the Chinese capital found itself compelled to turn and retrace its steps to Tientsin, there was an almost world-wide cry of disappointment and of protest. But it was not the fault of the leaders of the expedition, whether American

or European. The whole trouble arose from the fact that the foreign governments had underestimated the power and the unity of the Chinese forces. They had sent out a posse to subdue a riot; they encountered in fact a nation in arms. It was only by the most desperate and persistent fighting that the expeditionary force regained its base at Tientsin. Captain McCalla, who was second in command, was wounded three times during the march. When eight miles from Tientsin the column captured the Chinese imperial arsenal near Hsiku, but were there so surrounded by a superior force that it was necessary to send out a runner to secure relief. More American marines and blue-jackets then joined the force on shore and within a comparatively few days the navy had landed several hundred fighting men wearing the blue of the United States. Japan and Germany, France and England then joined with suitable forces, and the second march on Peking, though bitterly contested every mile of the way, was successfully accomplished. When the Chinese capital was entered and the legations relieved, it was found that the rumors of the assassination of the ministers and the torturing of their families were happily without foundation. There had been steady fighting, much suffering and daily apprehension of the worst. Many of the brave defenders had fallen, but the diplomats were safe. By way of discipline and the assertion of the power of the United States and its allies the Chinese imperial government was compelled to throw open what is known as "The Forbidden City" to a triumphal parade of the allied forces through its boundaries, theretofore always shrouded from the gaze of any save the aristocracy of the Chinese Empire. The march of the marines and the blue-jackets to Peking was not merely a piece of gallant campaigning, but has had its influence upon the world's history and the world's development. It opened

China to civilization no less than did Perry in 1852 introduce Japan to the sisterhood of the progressive nations of the world. And as Japan, to-day standing on a plane of equality with the foremost peoples, expresses its gratitude to the great Republic which, against the Japanese will, forced modern civilization upon her, so China has begun to express its gratification that, by the suppression of the Boxer rebellion, and by the rude shattering of ancient superstitions, the United States opened the way for her to take the place to which her age and her great population entitle her.

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No peaceful duty ever performed by our navy, or, for that matter, any other of modern times, excelled in picturesqueness or was more successful than the famous cruise of sixteen battleships around the world in 1907-08. It might be thought a very simple thing to take sixteen of them on the same journey. But as a matter of fact a battleship, ponderous as it is, with its enormous weight of armor and of guns, and its vast quantity of machinery, is a complex and delicate affair. Its very massiveness adds to its delicacy, for its bottom can be no thicker than that of the ordinary steel ship, and to touch a rock or a sandbar with the enormous weight above means certain disaster. Admiral Evans, who commanded the fleet during its voyage around Cape Horn to San Francisco, lays great stress upon the difficulty of getting the ships ready, though several months were permitted for preparations. The problems were diverse and perplexing. International politics did not lessen them. The fleet was to go into the Pacific at the time when an agitation against the Japanese in California and other Pacific coast states was thought by many to put in jeopardy the friendly relations between the two countries. Newspapers and public men sin-

cerely believed that sending this colossal fleet of fighting ships into the Pacific would be regarded by Japan as an unfriendly act and might bring on war. The people of the Atlantic coast protested against being deprived of their chief naval defence. So far as the possibility of the fleet's causing a war, or its dispatch to the Pacific being intended to avert a war, the authorities held their peace, not only during the duration of the voyage, but until the present day. Yet there was ample cause for national reflection in Admiral Evans's light remark when all preparatory work was done, that the fleet was "fit for a frolic or a fight," and even more so in President Roosevelt's words of farewell at the last moment:

Remember, Admiral Evans, you sail with the confidence of the President more completely than any admiral ever did before; your cruise is a peaceful one, but you realize your responsibility if it should turn out otherwise.

But to make that fleet fit for a fight or a frolic took time and thought. First of all drill in fleet evolutions at sea was essential. Ten of the ships were new; had never been handled in fleet formation. Many of the officers had but little experience. One or two battleships had never fired their guns even to test the sights. Target practice was imperative. There were still veterans of the Spanish War in the turrets and on the berth-decks, but not enough to instil warlike skill into all the fourteen thousand men who would make the voyage. "It was my job," writes Evans, "and my responsibility, rendered greater by many discouraging obstacles and handicaps, to see that this fleet, though on the most peaceable mission possible, was ready to fight at the drop of a hat." To this end for long weeks there was daily target practice, and ceaseless repetitions of drills at sea. Yet with all possible diligence everything could not be completed before the sailing day, December 16th. The system of electrical fire control

on the ships, by which the discharge of all the guns can be regulated from one central point, was not completed when the ships sailed and had to be finished at sea, as was the case with the installation of the wireless telegraph system. Something of the magnitude of the former task may be judged from the fact that miles of wire had to be strung within each ship.

And then there was the coal supply to be considered. A fleet of battleships does not start out on a world-wide cruise and trust to luck to find coal. Colliers had to be found, loaded with coal and sent ahead to deposit it at points convenient for the ships. As for provisions the men of this fleet were not to subsist on the time-honored navy diet of hard tack and "salt horse." Two special supply ships loaded with food were to accompany the fleet, besides which the refrigerating rooms of each battleship were stocked with fresh meat. Turkey for the Christmas dinner to the amount of forty thousand pounds, thirty-five thousand pounds of Bologna sausage; eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds of fresh beef; ten thousand dozen fresh and nine thousand dozen dried eggs; one hundred and forty thousand pounds of onions; fifteen thousand pounds of jam and fifteen thousand pounds of chewing tobacco were among the contributions to Jack's light appetite. As for candy, it ran into the tons, for the blue-jackets afloat have a very sweet tooth.

When all was ready the fleet—sixteen battleships, six destroyers, the gunboat "Yorktown," which served as a dispatch boat, and the supply and repair ships, worth in all one hundred million dollars and carrying fourteen thousand men—all gathered at Hampton Roads to be reviewed by the President. The little fellows sailed without waiting for the review, since their limited capacity compelled them to dodge from port to port seeking coal. But on December 16th, punctual to the day and

to the hour, anchors were lifted, and with flags flying, bands playing and cannon booming, a farewell salute, the armada moved out to sea on its globe-circling trip. Into the details of this trip it is impossible to go at length here. It was one long drill while the ships were under way; one round of giving and receiving entertainment in port. A newspaper correspondent on the "Louisiana," who set forth thinking a voyage on a battleship would be something akin to a yachting cruise, enumerates as the day's duties from 3 A.M. to 8:40 P.M. forty-six different counts, each proclaimed by a bugle call. There is little loafing on a man-of-war. When nothing else was doing there was the unremitting watch for signals from the flagship, and the steady strain of keeping the exact distance of four hundred yards between the ships. At Magdalena Bay, in Lower California, where the ships stopped some weeks for target practice, Admiral Evans said to one of his captains, "I hope your officers have learned something on this cruise."

"Thirteen thousand miles at four hundred yards, night and day," was the answer, "including the Straits of Magellan; yes, they've learned a lot."

Of the receptions given to the fleet at both foreign and home points little need be said here. The pageant made foreigners admire and fear, and Americans applaud and exalt the new navy of the United States. But some description of what target practice means on a modern man-of-war may interest readers. I quote from Mr. Franklin Matthews, the correspondent of the *New York Sun*:

As has been said, the preparations for this target practice began as soon as the fleet was out of Hampton Roads. There was the daily drill of hours and hours at Morris tube practice, where the men shoot at little targets from little rifles attached to the big guns. The targets are kept in motion and every man has to shoot his

string of so many shots. The division officer soon comes to know which men have the sharpest eye, the steadiest hand, the coolest temperament and in time the pointers and trainers are selected and each man has his post assigned to him. And when the miniature target shooting is over for the day there is the team work drill with dummy projectiles and powder bags and day by day the men become expert in making this exact step and avoiding that false move, and show increasing deftness and zeal. They learned just how far to lean back and move their heads when the gun darts past their faces in its lightning recoil, and those who have never heard a big gun go off try to imagine what the roar will be like, and to nerve themselves not to mind it any more than a firecracker's report.

But it is time to shoot. Every one now is calm and eager to begin. The bos'n and three launches and two boats' crews go out and put up the first targets. The ship gets under way and steams about slowly until she gets the proper headway of a predetermined speed. The men at the targets set them up and steam away to a buoy a quarter of a mile from the target. Slowly the ship swings out and comes on the range just grazing the buoys that mark the path. The men are at the guns. The outward buoy is passed and then the ship approaches the first buoy where the firing is to begin. The exact range of that point is known. The elevation of the gun is known as is also the deflection. You know the sights have to be right on the target, but the gun itself has to be aimed a little to one side, so as to account for the side movement of the projectile, due to the ship's movement as it flies through the air. What is called fire control determines just how much the gun must be elevated and how it must be deflected at a certain instant. There is a man at the gun who turns little wheels and adjusts gauges and he gets word from some one else just what to do and when to do it. Never mind how this is communicated to him. Meantime one man has been training the gun sideways, and another has been raising or lowering it independently of the man who has been setting the deflection and fixing the range. When the cross wires in the gun pointer's telescope are right on the bull's eye and it is time to fire he pulls a trigger and the electrical apparatus sends a lightning impulse into the powder, there is a roar, a thin cloud of smoke from the primer, a flash and you look for the splash to see if it is a hit.

As the ship proceeds along the base of the triangle the deflection and range have to be changed constantly. The change is greatest at the end of the run. Along about the centre when you are just opposite the target the changes are slight, but it is just as hard to hit the target. All these changes are matters of fractions of a second. It is not deliberate work, but it is done carefully, and that is where the element of training comes in.

The first roar of a gun sends a thrill through the ship. The man who has fired it is nervous. If it's a miss he steadies himself at

once. Rare is it that the second shot is a miss. The gun-shy part of that man's career is over. He is now as cool as if he were whistling Yankee Doodle. Bang and crack go his shots. Perhaps the gases obscure his vision to some extent. He waits an instant before he fires. Pump, pump goes the trigger. He's got the range, he's got his nerve, he knows when he hits and when he misses. It's a big contest and his tools of trade are the confined element of destruction with the accumulated scientific skill of decades behind him, and the result depends upon his clear vision and steady hand. The task inspires him, his face is drawn tense, he forgets everything else, he becomes part of that machine of destruction, an automaton. . . .

When the time comes for the practice of the great guns no red paint is needed to mark the hits. You can see the projectiles as they near the target, needle-like things that seem to fly with the speed of lightning. You can see the holes they make if you take a glass. Their roar is dull and the shake of the ship is a powerful tremor. Your ears are not smitten as with the smaller guns, but the shock is tremendous. You are close to the manifestation of a terrific force. But if you wish to see the best part of the work you must go into the casemate where the firing is done. Ah! there is where the team work is going on.

Take a seven-inch gun. The word to commence firing is passed, powder and projectiles are all ready. The gun captain throws open the breech lock. The men lift the projectile and place it in the breech. Scarcely have they removed their tray before a long wooden rammer is thrust in, and the projectile which has been carefully smoothed off and oiled is run home and seated. Get out of the way quick, rammer, for the powder bags are being thrust in! Don't make a false step, for you may hinder some one who has just one thing to do in the shortest possible time.

The charge is now home. The gun captain whisks the breech into place, the primer is attached, and then the captain slaps the pointer on the back or cries, Ready! All this time the gun is being trained the range and deflection has been changed, and instantly there is a roar, a blinding flash. The members of the crew close to the gun move just far enough back to escape the recoil, like a prizefighter when he throws his head back and escapes a blow by a fraction of an inch.

Open comes the breech in a flash, then another charge on it, another slap on the back, another roar, and it's a hit or a miss. Then a third charge and another and another. The men sweat and breathe hard, their faces become strained and some of them white. The fight is on, and the work, second by second by second, every one of them valuable as hours would be ordinarily, saps the strength and energy of the men in that supreme effort.

"Every shot a hit!" cries one of the men exultingly. . . .

But the twelve-inch guns! Pack the cotton well into your ears!

Keep your mouth open! Stand as far away from the muzzle as you can on the ship! Secure all the things in your stateroom, for if you don't you may find your shaving mug on the floor and your hair brush mixed up with fragments of your soap dish. Close your port or else your trinkets may be whisked into a heap and some of them broken to pieces. The whistle has blown. The seconds go by oh how slowly. Will they never get that gun loaded? Then comes a blast. The white flame seems brighter than sunlight, the roar runs through you like an electric shock, the decks seem to sink, and you wonder if the eruption of Mount Pelée had more force than that. You look toward the target. There goes the projectile straight through the bull's eye. Then an enormous geyser leaps into the air more than a hundred feet high. Surely that is Old Faithful. Then comes another half a mile away, then another and another, and you wonder if the projectile is going clear over to Europe.

So day by day the work of target practice at Magdalena Bay, surrounded by arid and uninhabited shores, and screened from watchful eyes, goes on for a month. Then up the Pacific Coast to San Francisco the fleet proceeds, officers and men being lavishly entertained at every port. It is a great sight for the Pacific, and a great benefit to the navy, for as a result of the display no section of the country becomes more enthusiastic over a greater navy than these Pacific commonwealths. At San Francisco there is a double change of commanders. Admiral Evans, broken in health, and suffering cruelly with the pain of his wounds, received at Fort Fisher, retires. Admiral Thomas succeeds him, only to be taken with a fatal illness. Admiral Sperry thereupon takes command of the fleet, charged with conducting it on the remainder of its voyage around the world. To him and to the officers and men the President sent a congratulatory dispatch ending, "You have, in a peculiar sense, the honor of the United States in your keeping and therefore no body of men in the world at this moment enjoy a greater privilege or carry a heavier responsibility."

From San Francisco the long voyage across the Pacific

brings the ships to Japan. Here where certain unfriendliness had been apprehended nothing was met but enthusiastic hospitality. The frolic and not the fight was the order of the day, and the newspaper critics who thought that the fleet in Japanese waters would be a menace, found it instead an incentive to international friendship. The officers were entertained by the Mikado, the men by the people of Japan. In the ports they visited official placards were put up ordering shopkeepers to refrain from charging extra prices for their goods, and even directing the people on the streets to avoid staring at the Americans or indulging in any demonstrations likely to cause turbulence. Indeed at every point on the remainder of the long voyage the reception of the fleet was most hearty and its contribution to the friendship of nations a notable one. It reached the Mediterranean by way of the Suez Canal just at the time of the terrible disaster at Messina, and the "Connecticut," "Vermont," "Massachusetts," and "Kansas" were sent to that point to aid the sufferers and assist in the policing of the ruined city. Once in the Mediterranean the fleet was long split into sections to reassemble at Hampton Roads February 22nd. First of the ships to reach a home port was the "Maine," which had been detached from the fleet. She entered Portsmouth harbor October 19th after a voyage of thirty-six thousand miles. She had been at sea three hundred days. Her coal consumption was twenty-two thousand tons for the trip. The fleet reassembled at Hampton Roads on Washington's birthday, there to be reviewed by the President, who had bade them God speed little more than a year earlier. Its performance in circumnavigating the globe, not merely without disaster, but without injury to, or exhaustion of, its machinery was hailed by naval experts in all parts of the world as an unprecedented achievement.

CHAPTER XXIX

Reorganization of Naval Administration—Fleet Mobilization—
Troubles with Mexico—Tampico Incident—President Wilson
to Congress.

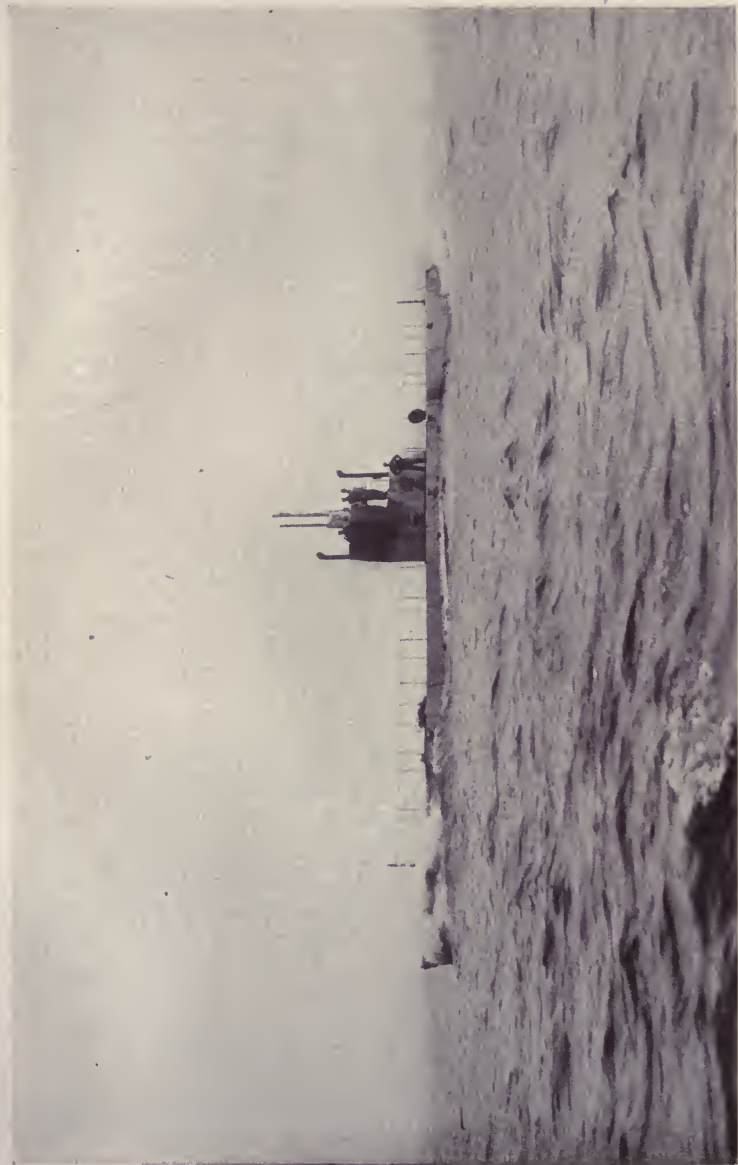
ON March 4, 1909, George von L. Meyer, of Massachusetts, became Secretary of the Navy, succeeding Truman L. Newberry, who had been Secretary since December 1, 1908. Mr. Meyer proved to be one of the most efficient heads which the navy has had since its establishment. He at once took steps to make important changes designed to bring about greater efficiency in the administration of naval affairs.

Mr. Meyer in his first annual report after reviewing the history of the formation of the Naval Bureaus, and the conditions which limited their efficiency and usefulness, outlined a general plan for their reorganization. He stated that the business administration of the navy department logically divided itself into groups, under personnel, material, and the operations or management of the personnel and material. The personnel includes the Bureau of Navigation, Medicine and Surgery, and the Marine Corps; material belongs to the Bureau of Construction, Ordnance, Equipment, Steam Engineering, Supplies, and Account. Public works are the province of the Bureau of the Yards and Docks. Mr. Meyer pointed out that heretofore inspection of the fleet and its adjuncts, the navy yards, and other shore stations had not been made by any departmental inspection reporting directly to the Secretary, and that the direction of the fleet, its operation, and its preparedness for war had not been carried out with the adequate methods. He pointed out that

while the General Board was useful, it was without responsibility for carrying out the recommendations of the Secretary. The Bureau of Navigation, without specific authority over the other bureaus and with its own duties to occupy it, had only in part supplied the lack of suitable machinery for directing the operations of the fleet, and its preparedness for war. On account of the growth of the navy and the increasing amount of business the different bureau chiefs had been necessarily engrossed in the details of their duties; with the complexity and conflicting interests involved in the creating and maintenance of a modern fleet they at times had failed to agree on matters where the field of each had overlapped. In this and similar situations the Secretary of the Navy was without expert advice and aid in making his decisions, and, moreover, was not kept properly informed as to what was going on in the logical divisions in the business departments of the navy.

To effect the principal changes which he wished to bring about Mr. Meyer recommended that the Bureau of Equipment be abolished, and the Secretary be authorized to distribute its duties among other bureaus. These other bureaus were to be continued in full effect.

To gain greater efficiency in administration, Mr. Meyer detailed officers of rank especially fitted by experience and of recognized ability in their several fields for special branches of effort and study. These aides were as follows: The aide for operations, whose function it was to advise the Secretary as to strategic and tactical matters in conjunction with the General Board, and also to advise regarding the movements and dispositions of naval vessels; the aide for personnel, whose duty it was to advise the Secretary on matters which fall under the Bureau of Navigation, the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, the office of the Judge



U.S. SUBMARINE "K-7"

Advocate General, and the naval examining and retiring boards; the aide for material to advise the Secretary generally in all matters concerning the construction, arming, equipment, and supplying of naval vessels, and the management of naval yards; the aide for inspection, who would advise on all inspections ashore and afloat, coming under the board of inspection and survey for ships, the board of inspection for shore stations, and the special inspection officers. With the assistance of these aides, the Secretary was provided with a minimum number of advisers corresponding to the natural grand divisions of the department, the object being to arrange the duties so that each aide should be responsible to the Secretary for the advice given in matters pertaining to his own duties. The Secretary was thus enabled to keep in closer touch with the business of the navy, and to bring about more economical administration with greater efficiency. The officers appointed to fill these positions were Rear-Admiral Wainwright, aide for operations; Captain (later Admiral) Fletcher, aide for material; Rear-Admiral Ward, aide for inspection; Rear-Admiral Potter, aide for personnel. This plan proved very effective in the years in which it was in operation. On the accession of Secretary Daniels, it was to a large extent abolished, or so modified as to amount to practical abolishment.

In 1911 was begun a custom of mobilizing the navy in large detachments at different places, for the purpose of testing the preparedness of the fleet, and the efficiency of the organization of the ships in the navy yards. The first of these reviews was in New York harbor on October 30, 1911. Twenty-four battleships, two armored cruisers, two cruisers, twenty-two destroyers, and other vessels aggregating a total of ninety-eight, with a tonnage displacement of 576,634,

were gathered together. On November 1 the fleet in New York harbor was inspected by the Secretary of the Navy, and on the following day the fleet was reviewed by President Taft, while it was at anchor and as it steamed out of the harbor in fleet formation. Thousands of people visited the ships while they remained in New York harbor, and aside from the technical mobilization there was given an object lesson of the power and efficiency of the fleet. The second mobilization, in 1911, was held at San Diego, California, on October 20. It included one battleship, five armored cruisers, two cruisers, and ships of other classes amounting to a total tonnage of 117,957. While this review was much smaller than that on the Atlantic coast, it was eminently successful, and was particularly interesting because it included the battleship "Oregon," recently constructed.

In the following year, 1912, there were also two great mobilizations. As in the previous year, the Atlantic fleet was gathered in the North River, New York City, beginning October 14, 1912. The collection of vessels in this mobilization combined the largest American fleet ever gathered together. There were thirty-one battleships, four armored cruisers, and eighty-eight smaller vessels, representing a total displacement of 720,486 tons. Attached to these vessels were 1,300 officers and 27,464 enlisted men of the navy and marine corps. Among the great battleships were the "Arkansas" and the "Wyoming," each of 26,000 tons; the "Utah," 21,825 tons, and the "Delaware" and "North Dakota," 20,000 tons each. The total displacement of battleships was 478,508 tons. There were in the review which ended the mobilization twenty-five more vessels than participated in the review of the previous year. Of these, eleven were completed, commissioned, and added to the active

fleet since the date of the previous review. The President and Secretary of the Navy were present and inspected the fleet and reviewed the vessels as they passed out of the harbor. A spectator thus described the scene when the President's yacht, the "Mayflower," began its tour of inspection: "It was a great sight. When the President's flag was broken out on the 'Mayflower,' twelve hundred guns roared in simultaneous salute; and that was a great sound. It reminded one of Bunker Hill and New Orleans, of Chapultepec and Santiago; of the things our navies and armies have done; of the things our country stands for and on occasion has needed armies and navies to maintain—the great big, broad, enduring, enlarging, advancing principles of human liberty and social justice." The other mobilization in 1912 was held in Manila Bay.

In October, 1913, nine battleships of the Atlantic fleet sailed from Hampton Roads for various ports in the Mediterranean. This trip lasted for about three weeks. Conditions in Mexico in this year made it necessary to employ a large portion of the fleet in patrolling the coasts on the Atlantic and Pacific sides. Following the revolutionary outbreak in Mexico City in February, it was found necessary to station over twenty vessels off the harbor of Vera Cruz and other parts of Mexico. The Mexican situation continued to grow in seriousness until it culminated in the attack on, and capture of, Vera Cruz by American naval forces.

In order to understand the circumstances which led up to this important event, a brief summary of the political happenings in Mexico prior to that time will be helpful. Francisco I. Madero became president of Mexico following the successful termination of a rebellion against President Diaz, organized and

carried through by Madero and his adherents. His tenure of office was short-lived. In October, 1912, Felix Diaz, nephew of Porfirio Diaz, raised the standard of revolt at Vera Cruz. This was easily suppressed, but on February 9, 1913, the military cadets in the City of Mexico mutinied and liberated from prison General Diaz and General Bernardo Reyes, an old-time enemy of Madero. A rebel force under General Diaz gathered in the arsenal in the city, which they defended against attacks of the federal troops, and also were able to carry on defensive operations against forces of the government. General Victoriano Huerta, a commander of the Madero forces, on February 17, combined with General Blanquet and turned against the Madero government. President Madero, Vice-President Suarez, and other officials were arrested on February 23. The president and vice-president were shot "while attempting to escape." On February 19 General Huerta assumed the title of provisional president. On October 26 he was elected president of the Republic.

The Mexican situation, as a result of these occurrences, became a serious problem for the United States Government. Great Britain, France, and other European countries recognized Huerta as provisional president, and it was held by some Americans that such recognition should be given by their government. Others advocated armed intervention to protect the property and lives of Americans in Mexico. President Taft during his last weeks in office maintained a policy of non-intervention and non-recognition. On March 4, 1913, he bequeathed the Mexican situation to his successor, President Wilson. He, like his predecessor, refused to recognize Huerta as president. He made attempts to bring about a satisfactory solution by send-

ing a personal representative without diplomatic rank as mediator, for the purpose selecting John Lind, former governor of Minnesota.

Mr. Lind arrived in the City of Mexico on August 10, instructed to inform Huerta that since "It became daily more and more evident that no real progress is being made toward the establishment of a government at the City of Mexico which the country will obey and respect," and since "the present situation in Mexico is incompatible with the civilized development of Mexico herself, and with the maintenance of tolerable political and economic conditions in Central America," all parties should assent to a settlement upon the following terms: First, an immediate cessation of fighting throughout Mexico, and a definite armistice solemnly entered into and scrupulously observed; second, security given for an early and free election in which all will agree to take part; third, the promise of General Huerta not to be a candidate in the presidential election; and four, the agreement of all parties to abide by the results of the election and co-operate in the most loyal way in organizing and supporting the new administration. The United States would recognize and assist a government thus established.

The Mexican Government refused to agree to this plan. Mr. Lind, however, continued to remain in Mexico, in an effort to bring about some solution of the problem. In this effort, however, he was not successful, and relations with the United States Government continued to become acute. A general election was held on October 26, 1913, in which Huerta was elected president. President Wilson protested and the American representative at Mexico City, Nelson O'Shaughnessy, demanded the resignation of Huerta as provisional president. The election was declared invalid by Congress on December 9 on the ground that

less than one-half of the electoral districts had sent in legal returns. Congress met, however, and extended the term of General Huerta until July 5, 1914.

On December 2, 1913, President Wilson read a message to Congress in regard to the Mexican situation. In this he said, "There can be no certain prospect of peace in America until General Huerta has surrendered his usurping authority, until it is understood on all hands that such pretended governments will not be countenanced or dealt with by the government of the United States. We are friends of constitutional government in America, because in no other way can our neighbors, to whom we would wish in every way to make proof of our friendship, work out their own development, in peace and liberty. Mexico has no government. The attempt to maintain one at the City of Mexico has broken down, and a mere military despotism has been set up which has hardly more than a semblance of national authority." The President further said, "As for Huerta, he has not succeeded; the collapse is not far away. We shall not, I believe, be obliged to alter our policy of watchful waiting, and then, when the end comes, we shall hope to see constitutional order restored in distressed Mexico by the concert and energy of such of her leaders as prefer the liberty of the people to their own ambitions."

During these events the vessels of the American navy were patrolling the Mexican coast. On December 10, the port of Tampico, then held by forces in rebellion against Huerta, was attacked by Constitutional forces. Admiral Fletcher, fearing damage to the business property in Tampico, ordered cessation of fighting on December 12. On the following day the siege of the city was raised by the arrival of Constitu-

tional reinforcements. Huerta's power continued to decline in the early part of 1914, and this resulted largely from the lifting of the embargo on the importation of arms into Mexico across the American frontier. President Taft had by executive order prohibited the traffic in arms across the border, but on February 3, 1914, President Wilson ordered the embargo raised. This gave opportunity for those opposing Huerta in the northern part of the country to purchase large quantities in arms, ammunition, and machine guns in the United States, and the effect was soon registered in the increased activity of the opposing armies.

The refusal of President Wilson to recognize Huerta as president had made it almost impossible for the latter to borrow money. In a series of notable addresses delivered at this period President Wilson made it clear that in his policy of "watchful waiting" his sympathies were with the revolutionists headed by Carranza.

The spark needed to bring about the explosion that was imminent was lighted on April 9, 1914. The Constitutionalist army, composed of those who opposed Carranza, and the Federals, composed of his adherents, were fighting for the possession of Tampico on the eastern coast. A party of American blue-jackets from a naval vessel landed at the Iturbide bridge at Tampico within Federal lines. They were immediately arrested by Federal soldiers. After it had been explained that the Americans came on a peaceful errand to purchase gasoline they were released, and apologies were promptly ordered by the Federal commander at Tampico, General Zaragoza, and by General Huerta. The latter promised, moreover, that the officer responsible for the arrest, Colonel Hinojosa, should be properly disciplined.

Admiral Henry T. Mayo, in command of the naval vessels in the port, was not satisfied, as he did not consider these amends sufficient, and he demanded, on April 10, that a salute should be fired to the American flag, on the ground that the Mexicans had insulted the flag by arresting sailors from a boat on which the flag was displayed. General Huerta refused to comply with this demand. He declared that the incident was absurdly trivial, and that no intentional insult had been offered to the American flag sufficient to fire the salute. Mr. O'Shaughnessy, in charge of American affairs in Mexico City, pressed General Huerta to yield, and the latter finally consented to fire the salute on condition that the United States should promise, in writing, to return the salute gun for gun. This was refused. In the meantime practically the entire United States Navy was ordered to be in readiness to sail to Mexican waters as a result of information given to the President by his personal representative, John Lind.

On April 18, President Wilson informed Huerta that the salute must be fired before 6 P.M. the following day without any written agreement as to the return salute. As Huerta remained obdurate, President Wilson, on April 20, asked Congress to authorize the use of armed force.

The Tampico incident, taken alone, would probably not have been sufficient to justify the aggressive move taken by President Wilson. In addition to this many other things had happened. Tampico is the centre of the oil industry in Mexico. This property belongs to English and American capitalists and represents large interests. The oil plants and property had been greatly damaged by artillery fire from Mexican troops. Protests made by the American Government had been



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PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT AND ADMIRAL EVANS

treated with contempt. It was even implied that the encouragement given by American officials to rebels was responsible for losses to property resulting from bombardments by two Mexican gunboats. The cumulative effect of these and similar incidents which affected American rights and property in Mexico resulted in the decision of the President for aggressive action.

On April 20, President Wilson appeared before the joint session of Congress and delivered a message on the Mexican situation. He recounted the facts in the Tampico incident and one or two other events which he declared led to his belief that the Huerta Government was probably slighting the United States in retaliation for the refusal of the American Government to recognize him as president. The President's address, aside from his explanation of the Tampico incident, was as follows:

The manifest danger of such a situation was that such offence might grow from bad to worse until something happened of so gross and intolerable a sort as to lead directly and inevitably to armed conflict.

It was necessary that the apologies of General Huerta and his representatives should go much further, that they should be such as to attract the attention of the whole population to their significance, and such as to impress upon General Huerta himself the necessity of seeing to it that no further occasion for explanation and professed regret should arise.

I therefore felt it my duty to sustain Admiral Mayo in the whole of his demand and to insist that the flag of the United States should be saluted in such a way as to indicate a new spirit and attitude on the part of the Huertistas.

Such a salute General Huerta has refused, and I have come to ask your approval and support in the course I now purpose to pursue.

This government can, I earnestly hope, in no circumstances be forced into war with the people of Mexico. Mexico is torn by civil strife. If we are to accept the tests of its own constitution, it has no government. General Huerta has set his power up in the City of Mexico, such as it is, without right and by methods for which there can be no justification. Only part of the country is under his control.

If armed conflict should unhappily come as a result of his attitude of personal resentment toward this government, we should be fighting only General Huerta and those who adhere to him and give him their support, and our object would be only to restore to the people of the distracted republic the opportunity to set up again their own laws and their own government.

But I earnestly hope that war is not now in question. I believe that I speak for the American people when I say that we do not desire to control in any degree the affairs of our sister republic. Our feeling for the people of Mexico is one of deep and genuine friendship, and everything that we have so far done or refrained from doing has proceeded from our desire to help them, not to hinder or embarrass them.

We would not wish even to exercise the good offices of friendship without their welcome and consent. The people of Mexico are entitled to settle their own domestic affairs in their own way, and we sincerely desire to respect their rights. The present situation need have none of the grave complications of interference if we deal with it promptly, firmly, and wisely.

No doubt I could do what is necessary in the circumstances to enforce respect for our government without recourse to the Congress, and yet not exceed my constitutional powers as President, but I do not wish to act in a matter possibly of so grave consequence except in close conference and co-operation with both the Senate and the House.

I therefore come to ask your approval that I should use the armed forces of the United States in such ways and to such an extent as may be necessary to obtain from General Huerta and his adherents the fullest recognition of the rights and dignity of the United States, even amidst the distressing conditions now unhappily obtaining in Mexico.

There can in what we do be no thought of aggression or of selfish aggrandizement. We seek to maintain the dignity and authority of the United States only because we wish always to keep our great influence unimpaired for the uses of liberty, both in the United States and wherever else it may be employed for the benefit of mankind.

CHAPTER XXX

Debates in the Senate—President Orders Vera Cruz Custom House Seized—Story of the Attack.

FOLLOWING the delivery of the President's address, both Houses of Congress at once considered joint resolutions which had been prepared. The House resolution read as follows:

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled that the President of the United States is justified in the employment of the armed forces of the United States to enforce demands made of Victoriano Huerta in unequivocal amends to the Government of the United States for affronts and indignities committed against this Government by General Huerta and his representatives.

This resolution, after a sharp debate, was adopted by a vote of 337 to 37.

The Senate did not agree to this resolution, but amended it to authorize the President to employ armed forces of the United States to enforce his demands for unequivocal amends for affronts and indignities committed against the United States, disclaiming, however, "any hostility to the Mexican people or any purpose to make war on them." It will be noted that the name of General Huerta was eliminated from the resolution. This was the result of a spirited debate in the Senate, which was a memorable one in American legislative history. Senator Lodge, of Massachusetts, made an eloquent address, protesting against the allusion to Huerta as being entirely responsible for the difficulties in Mexico. He declared that the reference to Huerta and his refusal to salute the American flag

as part reparation for the Tampico incident was not sufficient reason for his warlike movements. He declared that not only the honor of the flag, but that which the flag covers, the citizens of the United States, demanded atonement. Senator Lodge said:

More than one hundred and fifty American citizens, innocent, helpless people, have been murdered on Mexican soil. I, for one, when I demand atonement for the insults to the flag at Tampico, cannot put aside those people who have perished in Mexico, and whose deaths have gone unnoticed and unavenged. . . . I would not, without a protest at least, join in any resolution which can, by any construction, put the United States in the attitude of selecting one murderer and cutthroat in preference to another murderer and cutthroat. If we intervene in Mexico it must be for the protection of American citizens; it must be in the hope that by our intervention we shall try at least to bring back peace and order to that distracted country, for which we have no feeling but one of friendship. It must not be that we go there to take down one man and set up another.

Senator Root, of New York, also addressed the Senate in opposition to the terms of the House amendment. He declared that it would be folly to go before the world basing our right to intervene in Mexico on how and how far formal amends should be made for the Tampico incident. He declared:

There is a matter of justification. It is that, lying behind this insult to our flag by this poor, ignorant subordinate; lying behind it are years of violence and anarchy in Mexico. Lying behind it are hundreds of American lives sacrificed, millions of American property destroyed, and thousands of Americans reduced to poverty to-day through the destruction of their property. Lying behind it is the condition of anarchy in Mexico, which makes it impossible to secure protection for American life and property in that country by diplomatic means. Lying behind it is a condition of affairs in Mexico which makes that country incapable of performing its international obligations.

The insult to the flag is but a part,—the culmination of a long series of violations of American rights, a long series of violations of those rights which it is the duty of our country to protect,—violation not for the most part of government, but made possible

by the weakness of government, because through that country range bands of freebooters, and chieftains like the Captains of Free Companies, without control of responsibility. Lying back of this incident is a condition of things in Mexico which absolutely prevents the protection of American life and property except through respect for the American flag, the American uniform, the American Government.

It is that which gives significance to the demand that public respect be paid to the flag of the United States. There is our justification. It is a justification lying not in Victoriano Huerta or in his conduct, but in the universal condition of affairs in Mexico, and the real object to be attained by the course which we are asked to approve is not the gratification of personal pride. It is not the satisfaction of an admiral or a government. It is the preservation of the power of the United States to protect its citizens under those conditions.

The amended resolution was finally passed by both Senate and House. The President did not wait for the action of Congress, but ordered Admiral Fletcher, in command of the American naval forces in Vera Cruz, to seize the custom house. This order was given at Washington at four o'clock, in the morning of April 21, the President having been aroused from his sleep by urgent representations of Secretary Daniels.

The object of ordering the seizure of the custom house was to prevent the Huertistas from receiving a large supply of guns and ammunitions brought from Europe by the German steamer "Ypiranga." The arms could not be seized on board the German ship, but by occupying the custom house, United States forces could keep them from falling into Huerta's hands. By 11 A.M. on April 21, a detachment of American marines was sent ashore from the "Prairie" and the "Florida" to seize the custom house, which was situated on a long pier. Mexicans stationed on the roofs of nearby houses fired upon the landing party. With the aid of the guns of the "Chester,"

however, the Americans were able to clear the streets and buildings near the custom house, and to occupy also the railway terminals, and the postal telegraph and cable offices. These movements were accomplished under the continuous fire from snipers who could not be seen. The Mexican troops stationed at Vera Cruz under the command of General Maass took no active part in the fighting. The most graphic account of the taking of the city is found in the formal report of Admiral Fletcher of the engagements, whose account is as follows:

When the cablegram of 8 A.M., April 21, to seize the custom house was received the following officers were in my cabin:

Captain W. R. Rush, U. S. N., commanding Naval Brigade; Captain H. McL. P. Huse, U. S. N., chief of staff; Commander H. O. Stickney, U. S. N., commanding "Prairie"; Lieutenant-Colonel W. C. Neville, U. S. M. C., commanding Marine Regiment.

They had been called on board to be informed of the situation and to assure me that the plans previously prepared for the employment of the naval forces against Vera Cruz were understood by them and that they were prepared to carry them out. The method of procedure adopted was to land marines from the "Prairie," "Florida," and "Utah," and the seamen battalion from the "Florida," seize the custom house, railway terminal, and cable office. The seamen battalion of the "Utah" was held on board awaiting news of the "Ypiranga."

Commander Stickney and Lieutenant-Colonel Neville returned to the "Prairie," and at 9 A.M. Commander Stickney went ashore and personally notified the American Consul that we would land to take charge of the custom house, and directed him to notify all foreign consuls and to send all foreigners aboard the Ward liner "Mexico," which was at Pier 4, and the "Esperanza," then moored in the harbor.

General Maass, the Mexican military commandant, was notified by telephone from the consulate that we would land at once to take charge of the custom house and he was urged to offer no resistance, but to withdraw in order to avoid useless loss of life and property of the people of Vera Cruz.

At 9:40 A.M. an officer from the "Prairie" boarded the foreign men-of-war in the harbor, "Carlos V" (Spanish) and "Essex" (British), and notified them of our intended action.

An officer from the "Prairie" visited the Fort of San Juan d'Ulloa, informed the commander of the fort that we would seize



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THE FLEET OF ADMIRAL EVANS

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the custom house and that any aggressive move on his part would be immediately followed by our opening fire with heavy guns on the fort. The commander of the fort said that he understood the situation, but if we opened fire he would return it. He had an armed guard of one hundred and sixty regular troops, who had charge of the prisoners.

Thus the preliminaries of the memorable day were arranged. The council in the Admiral's cabin had been called at 8 A.M. It was not yet ten o'clock when all was in readiness for the venture ashore, and Admiral Fletcher continued:

The Ward liner "Mexico," with foreigners on board, pulled away from Pier No. 4 and anchored in the outer harbor. Commander Cone, of the "Utah," after anchoring his vessel at 9:40 A.M., came on board. Cone reported his land force ready and waiting for any service, and returned to his ship.

At 10:30 A.M. the "Prairie" reported: "Am ready," and I directed Captain Rush to land his brigade and carry out orders. The following signal was sent to the "Prairie" at 10:50 A.M.: "Land and take Pier No. 4. Be prepared to cover landing by necessary gunfire." At 11:45 A.M. the "Prairie" signalled: "Battalion has shoved off." The landing force of the "Florida" shoved off at the same time and were joined by the Panama contingent of marines from the "Utah."

This made a total force of seven hundred and eighty-seven officers and men, of whom five hundred and two were marines, all under the command of Captain William R. Rush, U. S. N., captain of the "Florida."

At 11:30 A.M. the "Prairie" signalled: "Battalion has landed; no evidence of any resistance thus far."

At 11:45 A.M. signal was received from the consulate: "Cable station O. K.," and this meant that the cable station was in possession of our forces on shore and that communication with Washington was assured.

At 11:50 A.M. a signal was received from Captain Rush on shore that headquarters had been established at the Hotel Terminal and a signal station set up there.

At 11:55 A.M. Rush signalled: "Telegraph and post office occupied and doing business as ever." This was followed by: "Firing in town; no casualties as yet." At 12:21 P.M.: "Commenced firing on shore; Federals have commenced firing on United States troops."

Again at 12:30 P.M. Rush signalled: "One thousand men with

machine guns reported in this vicinity; desultory firing heavy at intervals; hurry 'Utah's' troops." I signalled "Utah": "Send your battalion ashore; urgent; you may steam in closer."

At 12:41 P.M. Rush reported his first casualties:

"Immediately on landing the marine regiment under Lieutenant-Colonel Neville advanced up Callo de Montesinos, seizing the cable office and detaching one company to seize the power plant north of the terminal station, and to cover approaches from the westward along railroad tracks.

"The head of the marine column had advanced to Avenida Bravo, when at 11:57 A.M. they were fired into from all directions. The marines' Colt automatic guns went into action at Independencia, Cinco de Mayo, Cortes, Hidalgo, and Bravo, and cleared these streets immediately. The men took positions in front of warehouses lining the north side of Montesinos and fired at the enemy, who had occupied the housetops, windows, and towers on the opposite side of the street. The marine regiment was then ordered not to advance but to hold their original position.

"In the meantime the 'Florida' seamen battalion under Lieutenant Wainwright had advanced and seized the custom house and custom warehouse, post office, and railroad terminal. They were under steady fire from the enemy in houses on Benito Juarez and Morelos Streets, which was returned. The artillery section of the 'Florida' went into action in front of the American consulate and shelled the enemy out of the old lighthouse on Benito Juarez Street. When the first report of casualties was received the 'Solace' was ordered from Tampico to Vera Cruz by radio."

The troops had been ashore nearly two hours before it seemed necessary to the commander that the heavier naval artillery aboard the ships should be brought into play. Then Admiral Fletcher left the flagship and took up his headquarters aboard the "Prairie." He continues:

At 1 P.M. I repaired aboard the "Prairie" with Captain Huse and Lieutenant Courts of my staff, and from this point directed joint operations ashore and afloat. The "Prairie" opened fire at 1:10 P.M. with a three-inch gun on the enemy's mounted troops in the sand hills beyond the city. Indirect fire was used, with a church tower as a point of aim, range twenty-five hundred to three thousand yards. The second shot fell among their troops and drove them beyond the sand hills.

Sharpshooters in the Naval School building and the New Market had been firing steadily on Pier 4, where all of our boats

were landing. Chief Boatswain McCloy, in charge of three picket launches armed with one-pounder guns, put out from Pier 4 and steamed full speed around the end of Fiscal Pier, directly toward the Naval School building.

When within a few hundred yards the launches opened fire simultaneously with one-pounders at the windows of the Naval Academy. They thus drew the fire of the Mexican forces along that section of the water-front, but located their position for the "Prairie," which immediately opened fire with three-inch battery over the heads of the launches, silencing the fire of the Mexicans in that section of the city.

The picket launches in their gallant dash were hit many times with rifle bullets and three times with one-pounder shells from the Naval Academy. Chief Boatswain McCloy was wounded in the leg and one seaman was fatally wounded.

The brigade signal station on top of the Terminal Hotel was exposed to the fire of the Mexicans from all directions. The signal squad under Ensign McDonnell remained at their posts during the twenty-four hours fighting, and though three of the seven signal men were shot while wigwagging messages, communication between brigade headquarters and the "Prairie" was never interrupted.

Fear of injury to non-combatants on the part of Admiral Fletcher seemed at this stage of the fighting to require a reconnaissance of the city by the civil and naval officials. By their conduct, gallant and patriotic as it might have seemed to themselves, the Mexicans were by resistance endangering the lives of women and children and the irreparable destruction of public and private property. Admiral Fletcher says:

3 P.M.—I did not desire to force the fighting through the city and used the guns of the ships as long as there existed a reasonable chance to avoid this severe measure. Every effort was being made to get into communication with the Mexican authorities, both direct and through the American Consul, and to represent to them the futility of further resistance on their part and the serious consequences that would ensue.

My chief of staff, Captain Huse, in conjunction with the American Consul, Mr. Canada, endeavored until after five o'clock to get into communication with any authorities in control, but their efforts were unavailing. Any further advance at this time of the day

would have brought the fighting into the most densely populated part of the city after nightfall. It was therefore decided to hold our present position and in case of unforeseen contingencies the heavy warehouses on Pier 4 could be securely held.

At 5 P.M. an officer was again sent to Fort San Juan d'Ulloa to inform the commanding officer that there must be no sign of military movement in the fort during the night and that no one would be allowed to leave the fort. The commanding officer agreed to this arrangement and promised to remain neutral.

Unlike many official reports of naval or military operations, the Fletcher report deals with numerous interesting sidelights on the general story of the three dramatic days at Vera Cruz. The first day's activities had ended. He now describes the night after the capture of the custom house, and says:

A Mexican naval officer from the naval station in Ulloa came on board the "Prairie" about 9 P.M. He had served in the Spanish navy and was on board the "Don Juan de Austria" at the battle of Manila. He requested in the name of the commandant that about three hundred navy-yard workmen and sailors be allowed to leave the station and join the forces under General Maass. The practical difficulty of allowing this was pointed out to him and he was told to inform the commandant that the matter would be taken up as soon as order was re-established in the city.

The "Florida" was ordered to sweep the entrance of the harbor inside the breakwater for mines with wires reported leading to Ulloa, and before the dragging was completed the "San Francisco" and "Chester" entered the harbor during the night.

Investigation and aeroplane observations subsequently proved that there were no mines in the harbor.

At 7 P.M. the following radio was sent to flag officer, "Arkansas" (Rear-Admiral Charles J. Badger, who later succeeded, through seniority, to the command at Vera Cruz):

"Will hold Pier 4 for the night. Desultory street firing continues. You should be prepared to land infantry battalions and artillery immediately on arrival under cover of darkness. Captain Huse or myself will repair on board on your arrival to advise you of the situation.

"FLETCHER."

Desultory rifle firing continued until midnight, with occasional shots throughout the night. The dead and wounded were sent aboard the "Prairie," and the medical officers of the "Carlos V."



TORPEDO DESTROYER U.S.S. "REID"

and "Essex" came aboard and offered their services, which were gratefully accepted.

Reports were received that the enemy were preparing to attack with artillery during the night, and the "Utah" and "Florida," anchored outside the breakwater, were directed to be prepared to use turret guns and searchlights, if ordered. The "Prairie" kept searchlights trained on points along shore from which sniping had occurred during the day.

Both the "Utah" and "Florida" have twelve-inch breech-loader rifles in their turrets. What would happen to the picturesque skyline of the tropic port of Vera Cruz may be imagined. Twelve-inch guns of modern make have not been used in bombardment, except in the Japanese attacks on Port Arthur, since Seymour and Beresford battered the fortifications of Alexandria to powder in 1882.

At 9 P.M. the "San Francisco" entered the harbor and anchored three hundred yards north of the "Prairie." She immediately landed her battalion of two seamen companies, which reported to the brigade commander on shore. The "Chester" entered the harbor at 12:05 A.M., April 22, and anchored off Sanidad Pier. Her battalion of seamen and marines was landed immediately.

At 1 A.M. censorship was established. Rear-Admiral Badger, with five battleships of his fleet, came to anchor in the outer harbor, and with my chief of staff I repaired on board the flagship at 2:45 P.M. After explaining the situation to the admiral, he decided to land his forces, and the seamen and marine battalions of the "Arkansas," "New Hampshire," "South Carolina," "Michigan," and "New Jersey" landed at 4 A.M., under cover of darkness, and promptly moved to their assigned positions, joining the organization on shore.

There had been excitement enough to satisfy the most critical on the first day of the capture of Vera Cruz, but the second day was the great occasion. Admiral Fletcher continues his story:

Early in the morning of the 22d efforts to get in communication with the authorities were renewed. By eight o'clock it was definitely ascertained that the firing of the enemy was not under organized control or acting under the direction of competent authority, and the following instructions were issued:

"BRIGADE COMMANDER, U. S. Navy Forces, Vera Cruz, Mexico.

"Subject: Readvancing and taking possession of the city of Vera Cruz:

"1. All efforts to get in touch with responsible authorities on shore have failed and efforts have been fruitless to have the authorities stop firing.

"2. I am well informed that the regular troops have withdrawn and the people now firing are irresponsible people under no control or authority.

"3. You will advance in your discretion and suppress this desultory firing, taking possession of the city, and restore order, respecting as much as possible the hotels and other places where foreigners are lodged.

"4. You are cautioned against the possible use by the enemy of machine guns and artillery.

"F. F. FLETCHER."

At 8:30 A.M. Rush signalled:

"Advance begun. Please shell military positions.

"RUSH."

The marine forces advanced through all streets to the north of Avenida Independencia, where they were met with heavy rifle and machine-gun fire from houses, hotels, hospitals, church steeples, and military barracks. They advanced slowly, clearing houses and roofs of snipers and entering every house in every block as they advanced.

The seamen forces advanced to the south along the water-front, clearing and protecting the left flank of the marines as they advanced south. The advance of the seamen was opposed by a continuous and concealed rifle fire difficult to locate. It came principally from Benito Juarez cuartel in the Plaza Constitucion, and Naval Academy, artillery barracks, and from the roofs and windows of houses in this section of the city along the water-front.

The second seamen regiment under Captain Anderson, United States Navy, was marched toward the water-front and in front of the New Market, Naval School, and the artillery barracks. In crossing the open ground between the Naval School and Benito Juarez lighthouse, about three hundred and fifty yards in width, they were met by a heavy rifle, one-pounder, and machine-gun fire from the Naval School building.

This situation looked critical. The "Chester," "Prairie," and "San Francisco" simultaneously opened fire with three-inch, four-inch, and five-inch batteries against the second story of the Naval School building. In a short time the upper story was riddled by forty shots and the fire silenced.

Our forces advanced steadily through the city, entering houses from which they were being fired upon and disarming the occupants. The "Chester," from a favorable position commanding the southern part of the city, shelled the enemy out of houses along

the water-front, old Fort Santiago, and from the vicinity of the military barracks. By 11 A.M. our forces were in complete possession of all parts of the city and fighting had practically ceased.

The following signal was sent to the cruisers "Chester," "Prairie," "San Francisco," and to brigade headquarters on shore:

"The division commander desires to express his appreciation and admiration for the splendid and efficient work of the naval brigade in their capture of the city of Vera Cruz, and the efficient support given by the cruisers in the harbor reflects great credit on the accuracy of fire of their gunners.

"FLETCHER."

The Atlantic fleet, under command of Rear-Admiral Badger, approached the harbor of Vera Cruz on the night of the twenty-first at full speed in the outer harbor and came to anchor in the outer harbor several hours ahead of the expected time.

I am not allowed to commend my superior officer, but I think it only proper to say in this report that Rear-Admiral Badger, during the naval operations on shore at Vera Cruz, afforded me the most prompt and willing assistance, and my slightest request of recommendation or call for aid was in all cases met with immediate compliance, and it is a great pleasure for me to record the thoroughly fine and generous spirit that was shown by him and his staff in their hearty support of the work on shore.

CHAPTER XXXI

Battle of Vera Cruz Continued—American Losses—Affairs in Haiti and San Domingo—Third Grand Review—Another Reorganization—Consulting Board of Civilian Scientists—Efforts for a Larger Navy.

THE "Prairie" remained moored in the inner harbor, with steam up, in a position to cover the landing of troops and control the water-front in vicinity of the consulate between Pier 4 and Sanitary Pier at the lighthouse.

During the afternoon of the 21st the "Prairie" had occasion to silence the firing coming from the Naval Academy, the Market Building near by, from a barge alongside the custom house wharf, and from a small frame house near Sanitary Pier. This was done by a few well-aimed shots from the three-inch guns and a Colt's automatic, which riddled the frame structure.

At 8 P.M. the "San Francisco" was directed by radio to enter the inner harbor and was warned against rifle fire from the breakwater at the entrance and along shore. She came in at 9 P.M. without pilot or the assistance of navigation lights, anchored near the "Prairie," and shifted berth to the moorings assigned, receiving a signal, "Well done."

The "Chester" arrived from Tampico twelve midnight, the 21st. She entered harbor with all lights screened and cleared for action, with marines stationed along deck for rifle fire. She promptly took up moorings in assigned position off Sanitary Pier and was signalled, "Well done." Both commanding officers reported on board "Prairie," received instructions as to disposition of our forces and general instructions relative to gunfire from their ships.

It was not desired to cause any more destruction of property than was necessary to protect our men ashore, and buildings were to be fired upon only when it was ascertained that they were being used by the Mexicans as defensive positions from which they directed fire upon our troops. This plan was most effectively and efficiently carried out by the commanding officers of all three ships and not a building was fired into unnecessarily.

The "Chester" was moored inshore, nearest to the firing, and at daybreak rifle firing was directed from small tugs and barges near No. 3 breakwater. This was returned with rifle fire, but had to be silenced by a three-inch gun. Later firing from a number of



ADMIRAL EVANS' FLAGSHIP

Courtesy of Collier's Weekly



points in this section of the city was located and both three-inch and five-inch guns of the "Chester" had to be used to silence it.

Soon after the final advance of the landing forces into the city, which commenced about 8:30 A.M. of the 22d, the Second Regiment, consisting of the battalions of the "New Hampshire," "South Carolina," "Vermont," and "New Jersey," marched across the open space between the lighthouse and the Naval Academy, passing to the southward. When our men met with a heavy fire most of them dropped prone on the ground or against lower walls of the Naval School, and instantly the guns of the "Chester," "Prairie," and "San Francisco" opened fire.

The firing was very accurate, directly over the heads of our men, and in a short space of time the whole second story of this building, about five hundred feet front, was a wreck, not a shot missing its mark.

The work of these three vessels—"Chester" (Commander Moffett), "Prairie" (Commander Stickney), "San Francisco" (Commander Harrison)—in supporting our troops on shore was most effective and is deserving of special praise. Initiative and clear judgment were required on the part of the commanding officers and the results showed in a striking manner the efficiency of the ships under their commands. The "Chester," being in the most forward position, did most of the firing and received a greater number of hits.

The "San Francisco" and "Prairie" were hit by rifle fire many times. Over a hundred shots hit the "Chester." Two men on the "Chester" and one on the "Prairie" were wounded.

The "Esperanza," in charge of Lieutenant Fletcher, lying between the "Chester" and "Prairie," was struck thirty-one times and one man of the crew slightly wounded. All refugees were placed in a position of safety and none was injured.

Although Admiral Fletcher's vivid report gives all the essential facts of the initial attack and the capture of the city, interesting sidelights are thrown upon the affair by newspaper correspondents who were present and witnessed the incidents which took place. The praise of the gallantry of the marines and sailors is uniform. Ninety per cent of the men who landed to attack the city had never before heard the sound of a hostile bullet. There was, however, no flinching, and this in spite of the fact that while they had been trained by their officers into the usages and practices

of civilized warfare, their first experience was of the warfare known in the old Indian days of the United States, the fighting of an unseen treacherous foe. As noted above, from the very start it was a battle between American sailors and marines and Mexican snipers, who hid themselves on the roofs or behind windows and tried to pick off the Americans one by one. Long after the city was in the hands of the American sailors this sniping continued, and it was necessary to make an almost house to house search before it was finally stopped.

One of the most thrilling experiences was that of fifty Americans who were pent up in the annex of the Hotel Diligencia, while on the roofs above them one hundred Mexicans fired almost continually at the invaders and citizens alike. The Americans were kept here for twenty-four hours. None was injured, although bullets from the rifles of marines and blue-jackets and shots from machine guns struck the building in showers, breaking windows, but not penetrating the thick walls.

The total American loss was eighteen killed and about seventy wounded. The persistence of sniping which continued for days after the city had formally surrendered made it necessary for Admiral Fletcher to issue an order that all natives bearing arms without right to do so, would immediately be killed. Firing immediately ceased. No sooner was the city under American control than a provisional municipal government was established, and steps were at once taken to bring about conditions as normal as possible. The streets were cleaned to such an extent as the inhabitants had probably never known before.

The naval forces continued to control the city until the arrival of General Frederick Funston, at the head of the Fifth Brigade of the regular army, on April 30.

The naval authorities then turned over to the army the command and control of the situation on shore. The navy engaged in no other hostile action in Mexico.

The bodies of the sailors and marines killed at Vera Cruz were brought on the battleship "Montana" to New York City, where on May 11 impressive funeral ceremonies, including an address by President Wilson, were conducted. Tens of thousands of men stood in the streets of the city with bared heads, as the artillery caissons bearing the bodies of the killed rolled heavily over the streets. The flags drooped at half-mast in every building. President Wilson spoke in part as follows:

The feeling that is uppermost is one of profound grief that these lads should have to go to their death and yet there is mixed with that grief a profound pride that they should have gone as they did, and if I may say it, out of my heart, a touch of envy of those who were permitted so quietly, so nobly to do their duty. . . . Duty is not an uncommon thing, gentlemen. Men are performing it in the ordinary walks of life around us all the time, and they are making a great sacrifice to perform it. What gives men like these peculiar distinction is not merely doing their duty, but their duty had nothing to do with them for their own personal and peculiar interests.

American naval vessels continued the services along the Pacific coast of Mexico, and in the important Mexican ports on the Caribbean during 1915. In June of that year an expeditionary force of two hundred marines was embarked from San Diego, California, and taken into the vicinity of Guaymas, Mexico. Raids by armed Yaqui Indians upon the property of American homes and settlers in the valley were causing grave concern for the safety of the settlers, and a force of marines was held nearby to afford them safe conduct to the coast. Conditions so improved, however, that it was not necessary to land the marines.

The crisis in the affairs of Haiti, which came about with the assassination of the president, Guillaume, on July 27, 1915, demanded immediate and energetic action on the part of the navy to protect American and foreign lives and property and to restore order in the country. American cruisers were dispatched to Haitian ports and armed guards were landed. Later an expeditionary force of about two thousand marines was sent to complete the occupation of all open ports. Two American blue-jackets were killed on the night of July 29, in an attack upon Port-au-Prince. Conditions continued to be serious, and on September 3, Rear-Admiral Caperton, commanding the American forces in Haiti, issued a formal proclamation declaring martial law in Port-au-Prince of the immediate territory occupied by the forces under his command. Two American marines were wounded in a skirmish on September 19, and in an attack by Haitian rebels on an American force of marines on September 26 one American was killed and ten wounded. Another American marine was killed on the following day. Following an agreement with the United States Government, signed on November 30, conditions in that country became practically normal again. There were no further hostilities during the year.

A third review of the entire Atlantic fleet was held in New York harbor on May 17 and 18, 1915. After an imposing parade with the blue-jackets and marines of the ships in the harbor through the streets of New York, the President on board the "Mayflower," followed by the "Dolphin" with the Secretary of the Navy on board, reviewed the fleet at anchor in the North River. The following day the fleet was again reviewed by the President as it passed out to sea. An-



U.S.S. "UTAH"

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review was held in Boston on the occasion of the annual conference of governors in that city in August, 1915.

Secretary Daniels in 1914 secured the passage through Congress of measures which altered the organization of the administration of the navy department as described in a previous chapter. There was created as a result of his efforts a Chief of Naval Operations, who under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy is charged with the operations of the fleet and with the preparation and readiness of plans for its use in war. The duties of the Chief of Naval Operations include the direction of the naval war college, the office of naval intelligence, the office of target practice and engineering competition, the operation of a radio service, and of other systems of communication, of the naval defence districts, and of the watch guard when operated with the navy; the direction of all strategical, tactical matters, organized manœuvres, target practice, drills and exercises, of the training of the fleet for war, and the preparation, revision, and enforcement of all tactic drill books, signal codes, and cipher codes. Captain William S. Benson was appointed to fill the office of Chief of Naval Operations. The reorganization incident to the creation of this office made necessary the abolition of the system of aides, heretofore in use, inasmuch as the Chief of Naval Operation looked after the duties which had been previously performed by these aides.

The reorganization of the navy department was completed by the creation of the Secretary's advisory council, composed of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, Chiefs of the Bureaus of Navigation, Ordinance, Steam Engineering, Construction and Repair, Yards and Docks, Supplies

and Accounts, Medicine and Surgery, the Major-General Commandant of the Marine Corps, and the Judge Advocate General.

The outbreak of the European war in August, 1914, brought new problems into the consideration of those interested in the navy. The United States cruiser "Tennessee" was stationed in European waters at the time and did efficient service in carrying American refugees from continental Europe to England, whence they were sent to the United States. Other vessels of the United States Navy were used in giving aid to Americans who were unable to secure passage to the United States on regular passenger vessels.

The development in naval warfare, as shown by the fleets of the European countries engaged in war, revealed the necessity of utilizing the natural inventive genius of the United States to meet these new conditions. New inventions and new devices were employed which heretofore had not been known in naval warfare. Secretary Daniels realized the necessity of employing the services of inventors in various fields to help in the improvement of the navy. He was successful in enlisting the assistance of Thomas A. Edison, who became the head of a Naval Consulting Board of Civilian Scientists composed of twenty-two members of eleven scientific societies. Each member of this board was an expert in his special line. Members of the board chosen were as follows:

Thomas A. Edison, Chairman, and M. R. Hutchison, Assistant to the Chairman; W. R. Whitney and L. H. Baekeland, of the American Chemical Society; Frank J. Sprague and B. G. Lamme, of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers; Robert S. Woodward and Arthur G. Webster, from the American Mathematical Society; Andrew M. Hunt and Alfred



Courtesy of *Collier's Weekly*

“WISCONSIN” AND “KEARSARGE” AT MALTA

Craven, of the American Society of Civil Engineers; Matthew B. Sellers and Hudson Maxim, of the American Aeronautic Society; Peter C. Hewitt and Thomas Robins, of the Inventors' Guild; Andrew L. Riker and Howard E. Coffin, of the American Society of Automobile Engineers; William L. Saunders and Benjamin B. Thayer, of the American Institute of Mining Engineers; Joseph W. Richards and Lawrence Addicks, of the American Electro-Chemical Society; William Le Roy Emmet and Spencer Miller, of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers; Henry A. Wise Wood and Elmer A. Speery, of the American Society of Aeronautic Engineers.

This board, after it had been organized, met in Washington, and was welcomed by President Wilson, who expressed the thanks of the Republic for their patriotic offer of co-operation. He assured them that the whole nation felt that we "ought to be prepared, not for war, but for defence," and that such co-operation is not a matter which the army and navy can take care of, but one in "which we must have the co-operation of the best brains and knowledge of the country." He wished them to feel, therefore, that the question has a very serious, definite, and practical purpose—that of securing their best independent thought as to how we ought to make ready for any duty which may fall upon the nation. He asserted that the spirit of America is always one of peace, but one of independence; one of good-will and human freedom, but one which is self-conscious, loving its world mission, and realizing that it must command the respect of the world.

On October 7, 1915, the board unanimously approved a plan for the establishment of a great research and experimental laboratory for the navy. The plan as adopted called for the establishment of a laboratory

at a cost of \$5,000,000 for grounds, buildings, and equipment, to be operated at an annual expenditure of from \$2,500,000 to \$3,000,000. It was provided, further, that a naval officer of rank should be in charge and that under him should be naval heads of broad experience in laboratory methods and science in general—practical men. The laboratory is to be located on tide-water of sufficient depth to permit a dreadnaught to come near, but not in a large city. Henry A. Wise Wood, one of the members of the board, resigned on December 22, 1915, as a result of opposition to the policy of Secretary Daniels.

From the beginning of the European war there was persistent agitation carried on both by public officials and private citizens to bring the army of the United States into a condition of effectiveness on the light of possible complications arising from the war. As it is generally admitted that the navy in the case of foreign war would be the chief line of defence, the discussion in regard to that branch of the service was even more aggressive than that relating to the army.

Differences of opinion arose between Secretary Daniels and naval officers as to the real condition of the naval forces. Secretary Daniels, both in his annual report made in 1915, and in statements made elsewhere, insisted that the navy was in excellent condition as regards preparedness for service. Testimony, however, given before the naval committee of the House prior to the preparation of the naval appropriations bill by naval officers who were in direct charge of bureaus of the navy department took a less hopeful view than that of Secretary Daniels.

Assertions were made that the navy was undermanned, that but few of the larger ships were in condition for actual warfare, that the submarines were,

with one or two exceptions, useless, and that there were many other defects in the navy which would seriously prevent its doing effective service in the case of war. The discussion went on through 1915, and the early part of 1916. In May of the latter year the naval appropriation bill was introduced in the House.

CHAPTER XXXII

Secretary Daniels' Program—Vessels Under Construction—Sinking of "F-4"—Aeroplanes—Wireless Telegraphy and Telephony—Creation of Admiral and Vice-Admiral—End.

THE Secretary of the Navy had planned a program which was intended to cover not only the necessities of the immediate future, but was extended to cover a period of five years. The Sixty-third Congress, which appropriated more money to naval increase than any of its predecessors, authorized the construction of five dreadnaughts, twelve destroyers, and twenty-six submarines—three of the latter to be larger than any nation had heretofore constructed. Appropriations, however, were made only for about one-third of the amount that would defray the building of the vessels authorized. It was necessary, therefore, for the Sixty-third Congress to make appropriations to continue the construction. The General Board of the Navy, in 1903, recommended a continuous building program, but no action was taken upon it. The basis of the recommendation was forty-eight battleships by 1919, and lesser units and auxiliaries in proportion. The report contemplated two battleships each year.

The program of Secretary Daniels included a certain number of battleships to be ready at certain dates, and specified, year by year, the number to be begun and amounts to be expended. If this program is carried out the navy in 1921 would be composed of the following vessels built or building:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Battleships, first line..... | 27 |
| Battle cruisers | 6 |
| Battleships, second line..... | 25 |
| Armored cruisers | 10 |
| Scout cruisers | 13 |
| Cruisers, first class..... | 5 |
| Cruisers, second class..... | 3 |
| Cruisers, third class..... | 10 |
| Destroyers | 108 |
| Fleet submarines | 18 |
| Coast submarines | 157 |
| Monitors | 6 |
| Gunboats | 20 |
| Supply ships | 4 |
| Fuel ships | 15 |
| Transports | 4 |
| Tenders to torpedo vessels..... | 3 |
| Special types | 8 |
| Ammunition ships | 2 |

Secretary Daniels placed a special emphasis on the necessity for building battle cruisers. He declared that in every naval event of consequence which had occurred in the North Sea area during the first two years of the European war the leading parts have been taken by cruisers and vessels of the scout type.

The first item in the new navy program was an estimate of \$276,470,000 as the first year's appropriation for hulls and machinery of two battleships, two battle cruisers, three scout cruisers, fifteen destroyers, two gunboats, one hospital ship, and one fuel ship. The appropriations made for similar vessels in 1914 was \$7,200,000. For the hulls and outfits of five fleet and twenty-five gunboats \$7,675,000 was asked. For armor and armament of vessels authorized the estimate of \$21,681,000, compared with \$9,577,998 in 1914. For aviation \$2,000,000 was asked for, and for reserve ammunition \$8,000,000. For the proposed experimental laboratory \$1,000,000 was provided. For fortification at the Panama Canal, \$5,600,000.

In addition to Secretary Daniels' program Congress had two others to consider. The first was a report of the General Board of the Navy made on July 30, which recommended a navy second to none by 1925. The second was another report made by the General Board on how best to spend \$500,000,000 on new naval construction in the next five years. Third, a plan prepared by the administration for spending \$502,000,000 on the increase in the navy during the next five years. This is in its chief essentials the plan outlined above.

There were building or authorized in 1916 nine vessels of the dreadnaught type, the "Oklahoma," "Nevada," "Pennsylvania," "Arizona," "Mississippi," "Idaho," "California," and No. 43 and No. 44. These vessels are among the most powerful of their class in the world, and represent in gun power greater strength than the whole of the American navy, prior to the authorization of the "Delaware" and "North Dakota" in 1907. The "Oklahoma" and "Nevada" were in such a condition as to be completed early in 1916, and the "Pennsylvania" and "Arizona" during the year. The "Mississippi," "Idaho," and "California" were begun and considerable progress was made in their construction. These vessels were authorized by the first session of the Sixty-third Congress. Two of the vessels were to take the place of the old "Idaho" and "Mississippi," which were sold to Greece. In addition to these dreadnaughts, there were under construction or authorized seventeen torpedo-boat destroyers, three fleet submarines, two fuel ships, two tenders to torpedo vessels, one transport and one supply ship.

The only submarine disaster which has overtaken the navy occurred during the naval manœuvres off Hono-

lulu March 25, 1915, when an accident occurred to the "F—4" which caused her to sink to a depth of three hundred and five feet, resulting in the loss of her commander, A. L. Ede, Ensign T. A. Parker, and the crew of nineteen men. Heroic effort was made by the naval authorities of Honolulu to locate the missing vessel, and save her crew, officers, and men. The vessel was quickly located and everything was done possible with the means at hand, but the apparatus available was inadequate for work, so that special devices had to be designed and built. On April 1 a party of expert deep-sea divers was hurried to Hawaii. With the party was sent additional apparatus. The divers took turns in descending to the submarine which was lying on her side on the slope of a deep-sea mountain. They finally succeeded in fastening cables about her whereby she might be towed into shallower water. The operation was not one of merely dragging the submarine across the bottom, but of lifting her as she was suspended by the cables from scows above and taking her toward the shore. The divers were able to remain only about twenty minutes at a time at the bottom, as there was a pressure of 138 pounds to the square inch, while the atmospheric pressure on the surface is only 14.7 pounds. While it required only four minutes to descend to the sunken vessel, it took about three hours to rise to the surface, as the upward journey had to be made in close stages.

The diving of these men to raise the unfortunate "F—4" was an act of heroism for which they deserve the thanks of the country. The lifting of the heavy vessel was five-sixths done, when a sudden storm resulted in great damage to the boat, necessitating a new method of procedure. The submarine was then within fifty feet of the surface, but the risk of complet-

ing the work with the appliances at hand was too great, and six pontoons were therefore specially constructed at the Mare Island Navy Yard and brought to Honolulu, on board the "Maryland," arriving on August 12, 1915. By this means, on August 29, the submarine was finally raised. The dead weight lifted was two hundred and fifty tons, from a depth of three hundred and five feet, one and one-half miles out from the harbor in the open sea. It was a feat unequaled in the annals of any navy. The credit for it belongs in a large measure to Rear-Admiral C. B. T. Moore, a navy constructor, J. R. Furer, and Lieutenant C. E. Smith, in addition to the divers. A board of investigation into the causes of the sinking of the vessel stated at its conclusion that the primary cause was the corroded condition of the lead lining and in consequence of certain rivets in the port wall of the forward battery steel tank; and the secondary causes were the poor diving qualities of the vessel, and its consequent failure promptly to respond to the measures taken to bring it to the surface. Only four of the bodies were identified, and these were sent home for interment. Fourteen other bodies were buried at Arlington Cemetery, with every honor. Three bodies were not recovered.

Continued improvements in the construction of air-sailing craft early turned the attention of naval experts to the employment of these craft in the services of the navy. The first appropriation for naval aeronautics was \$1,000,000. For 1916 \$2,000,000 was asked for by Secretary Daniels. An aeronautical station is maintained at Pensacola, where officers and men are daily trained in air-craft operating, and carrying out all kinds of practical experiments. There were in 1916 about twenty qualified aviators, who had been ap-

pointed navy air pilots. The number of aeroplanes belonging to the navy was, in May, 1916, 46. The great demand abroad for aeroplanes for use in the European armies made it difficult to get American manufacturers to devote as much attention to developing the needed type of navy aeroplanes or hydro-aeroplanes as otherwise might have been given.

Other important inventions which have an important bearing on navigation in the naval service were the wireless telephone and the wireless telegraph. Wireless telegraphy has come to be regarded as an indispensable adjunct of naval communications. Long-distance wireless telephone service was completed for the first time on September 29, 1915, from experiments extending over several months culminating in successful transmission of the human voice by radio from the naval radio station in Arlington, Virginia, across the continent to the station at Mare Island, California, twenty-five hundred miles away. On November 5, in the presence of a distinguished company, the Secretary of the Navy sat at his desk in the navy department, and sent the first order ever issued by the navy by wireless telephony. The use of long-distance wireless telephony in operations is still in an undeveloped state, but it is confidently expected that valuable use can be made of this wonderful demonstration.

Congress, in 1915, after a struggle which continued over a number of years, re-established the grades of admiral and vice-admiral of the navy, but confined them to officers afloat in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Asiatic fleets. The commanders of these fleets have the rank of admiral and the second in command the rank of vice-admiral. The rank of admiral was conferred upon Frank F. Fletcher, who commanded at the taking of Vera Cruz; upon Rear-Admiral C. McR.

Winslow, and upon Rear-Admiral Albert G. Winterhalter. The rank of vice-admiral was conferred upon Rear-Admiral Henry T. Mayo, commanding the first division of the Atlantic fleet.

As noted previously, the United States navy, which prior to the outbreak of the European war held second rank, dropped to fourth, as a result of a new construction carried on and completed by Great Britain, Germany, and France. This condition, it was generally admitted by those interested in the welfare of the country, should be remedied as speedily as possible. Had the recommendations of the General Staff made in 1903 been carried out, the United States Navy in 1916 would have held a rank second only to Great Britain. Congress, however, in time of peace, has always been reluctant to appropriate money for the construction of new vessels. With the conditions resulting from the European war, however, it is probable that this reluctance will be overcome. It will, even in this event, be years before the United States Navy can take its proper place among the navies of the world, for in the opinion of naval experts many of the vessels now appearing on paper as in first-class condition and ready for effective service, are undermanned, and in some cases unfit for service. The navy is also under-officered and undermanned. Testimony was given before the Congressional committee that from nine thousand to fourteen thousand men were lacking to properly navigate the vessels now in commission. Secretary Daniels has made efforts to make the service more attractive for young men by the introduction of educational courses, and while conditions have been improved in recent years, there is still much left to be desired on this score. In the opinion of men who have made a careful study of the subject the navy will never be as efficiently administered as it should be while a

civilian, unacquainted with its affairs, and with naval methods in general, is permitted every four years to undertake its direction and have full power to impose any plans which he himself may consider for the best. Presidents do not always appoint as Secretary of the Navy with an eye to their special adaptation for naval administration, but rather with a view to rewarding some deserving person with political service. To this power may be attributed to a certain extent, at least, more or less the disorganized condition of the navy in the years 1913-1916.

But in spite of inefficiency in its administration, nothing but honor has attached itself to the record of the United States Navy. It has at times been outclassed by its enemy, but the blue-jackets of the United States have never failed to give a good account of themselves. The American people have come to consider the navy as essential a part of their governmental activities and expenses as the courts or Congress itself, and in the long run they will insist that it shall be placed upon a footing that will give the United States its proper place in the councils of the nations.

The full registered strength of the vessels of the United States Navy on May 1, 1916, is shown in the following table:

| BATTLESHIPS | | BATTLESHIPS | |
|--------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
| FIRST LINE | | SECOND LINE | |
| NAME | TONS | NAME | TONS |
| Arkansas | 26,000 | Alabama | 11,552 |
| Delaware | 20,000 | Connecticut | 16,000 |
| Florida | 21,825 | Georgia | 14,948 |
| New York | 27,000 | Illinois | 11,552 |
| North Dakota | 20,000 | Indiana | 10,288 |
| Texas | 27,000 | Iowa | 11,346 |
| Utah | 21,825 | Kansas | 16,000 |
| Wyoming | 26,000 | Kearsarge | 11,520 |

BATTLESHIPS

SECOND LINE

Continued

| NAME | TONS |
|----------------------|--------|
| Kentucky | 11,520 |
| Louisiana | 16,000 |
| Maine | 12,500 |
| Massachusetts | 10,288 |
| Michigan | 16,000 |
| Minnesota | 16,000 |
| Missouri | 12,500 |
| Nebraska | 14,948 |
| New Hampshire | 16,000 |
| New Jersey | 14,948 |
| Ohio | 12,500 |
| Oregon | 10,288 |
| Rhode Island | 14,948 |
| South Carolina | 16,000 |
| Vermont | 16,000 |
| Virginia | 14,948 |
| Wisconsin | 11,552 |

ARMORED CRUISERS

| NAME | TONS |
|----------------------|--------|
| Colorado | 13,680 |
| Maryland | 13,680 |
| Montana | 14,500 |
| North Carolina | 14,500 |
| Pittsburgh | 13,680 |
| San Diego | 13,680 |
| Tennessee | 14,500 |
| South Dakota | 13,680 |
| Washington | 14,500 |
| West Virginia | 13,680 |

CRUISERS

FIRST CLASS

| NAME | TONS |
|------------------|-------|
| Brooklyn | 9,215 |
| Charleston | 9,700 |
| Milwaukee | 9,700 |
| Saratoga | 8,150 |
| St. Louis | 9,700 |

CRUISERS

SECOND CLASS

| NAME | TONS |
|-------------------|-------|
| Chicago | 4,500 |
| Columbus | 7,350 |
| Minneapolis | 7,350 |
| Olympia | 5,865 |

CRUISERS

THIRD CLASS

| NAME | TONS |
|-------------------|-------|
| Albany | 3,430 |
| Birmingham | 3,750 |
| Boston | 3,000 |
| Chattanooga | 3,200 |
| Chester | 3,750 |
| Cincinnati | 3,183 |
| Cleveland | 3,200 |
| Denver | 3,200 |
| Des Moines | 3,200 |
| Galveston | 3,200 |
| Marblehead | 2,072 |
| Montgomery | 2,072 |
| New Orleans | 3,430 |
| Raleigh | 3,183 |
| Salem | 3,750 |
| Tacoma | 3,200 |

In addition to the larger vessels noted in the list above, there were the following additional smaller craft:

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|----|---------------------|----|
| Monitors | 7 | Gunboats | 29 |
| Destroyers | 43 | Transports | 4 |
| Coast torpedo vessels..... | 36 | Supply ships | 4 |
| Submarines | 36 | Hospital ship | 1 |
| Tenders to torpedo vessels. | 8 | Fuel ships | 20 |

There were under construction on the first of May, 1916:

Nine battleships,
Seventeen destroyers,
Two fuel ships,
Forty-two submarines,
One transport and one supply ship.

Many of the vessels are of course antiquated, but all are fit for service of some kind unless otherwise noted in the table.



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